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Strahl

WALKS IN ALGIERS

AND

ITS SURROUNDINGS;

BY

L. G. (SEGUIN. Strahan

LONDON:

DALDY, ISBISTER AND CO.,

1878.

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PREFACE.

MANY books have been written about Algeria, but none, so far as I know, in the English language which profess to be handbooks for the use of the traveller to Algiers and its neighbourhood, with the exception of Murray's "Guide;" and this, embracing as it does a very large area, has naturally not a great deal of space to devote to one city, or even one province.

To this work, to M. Piesse's excellent "Itinéraire," to a particularly well-arranged French guide by M. Édouard Dalles, and to the various authors whose works are quoted in the course of the following pages, I am indebted for much valuable information.

That I have exhaustively treated all the matters of interest with which Algiers abounds I do not profess. For the antiquarian, for the archæologist, for the historian, for the naturalist, the artist, and the mere lover of the picturesque, it has endless treasures yet unrecorded; but I can, in sincerity, only wish for others as much real pleasure as I have myself derived from walks in and about Algiers.

THE AUTHOR.

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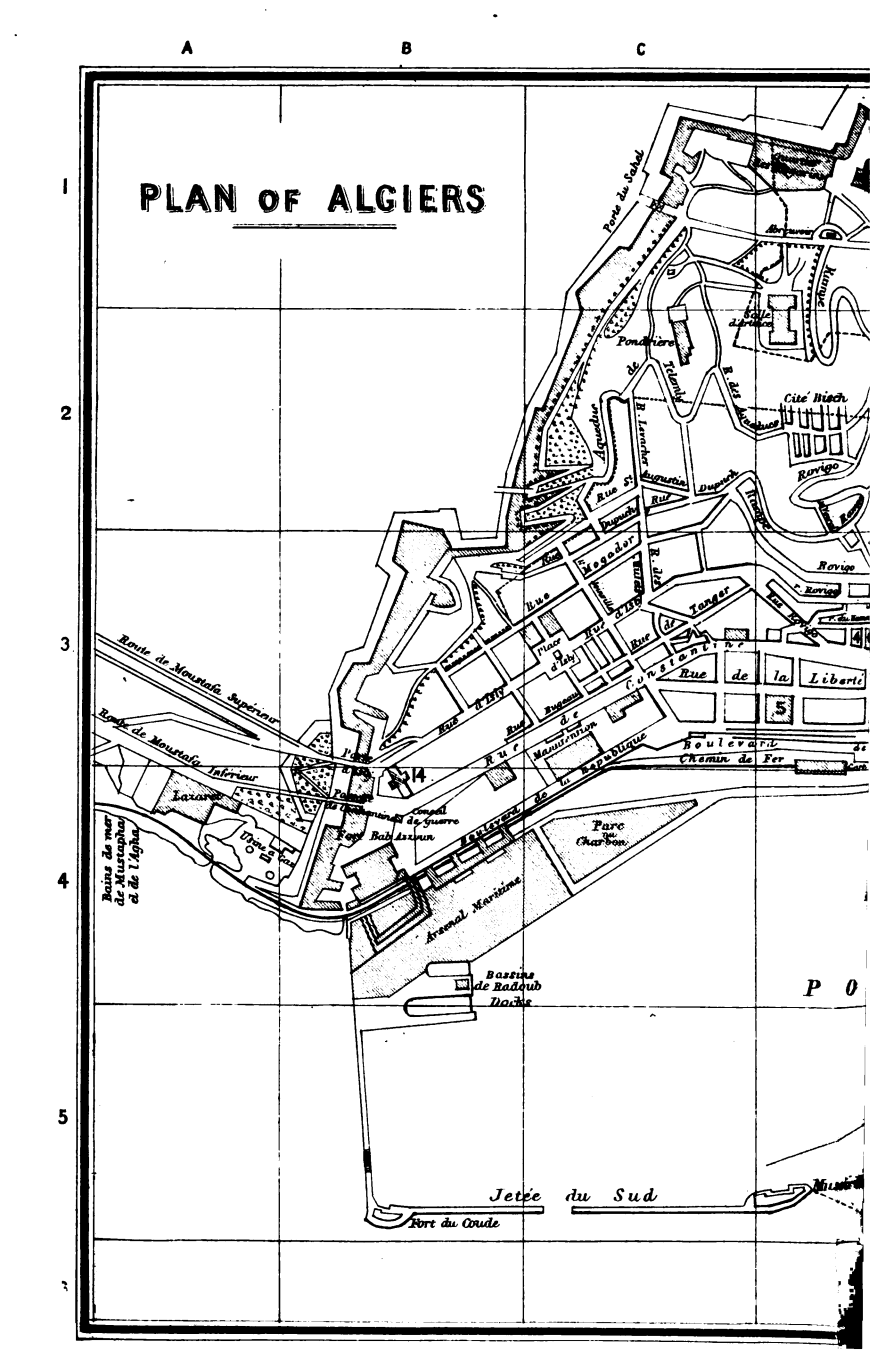
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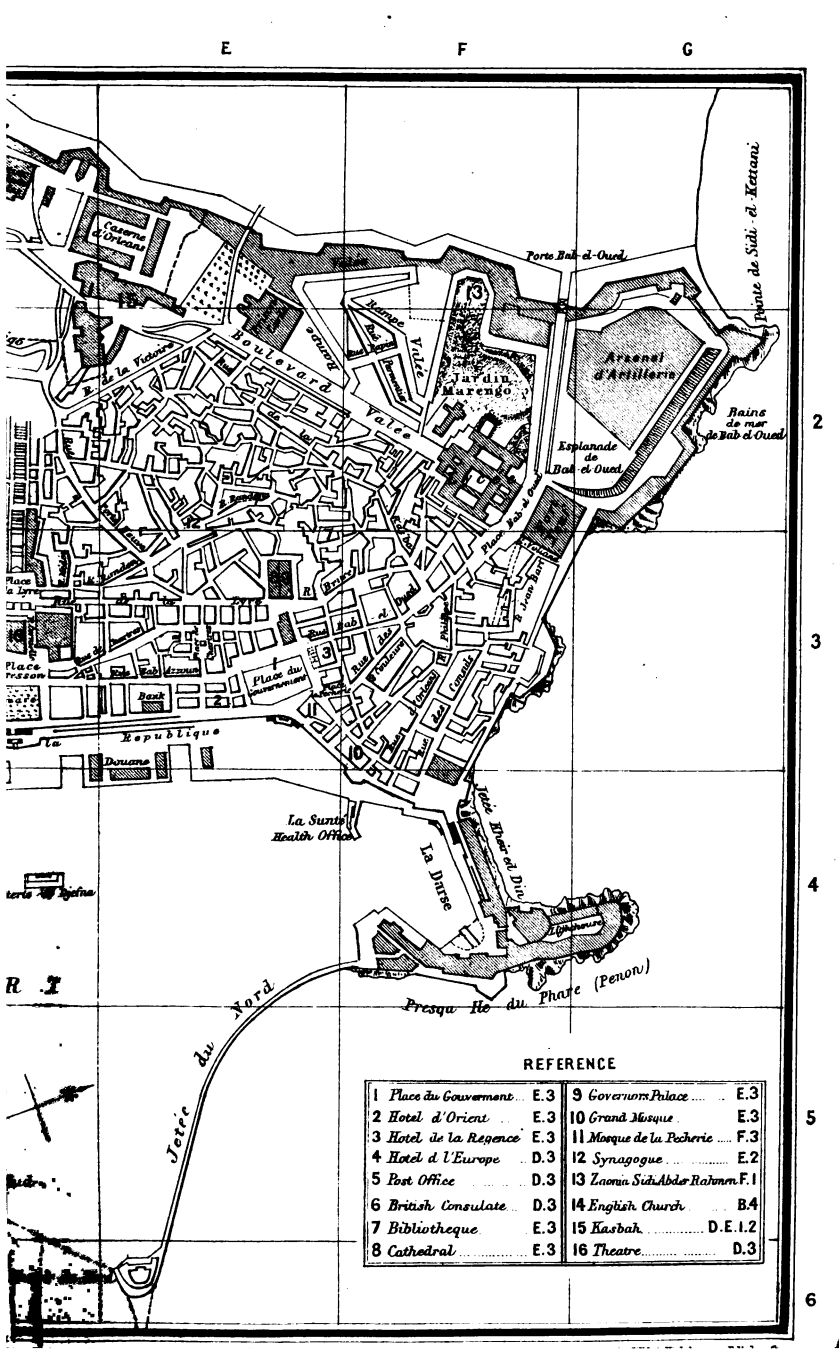
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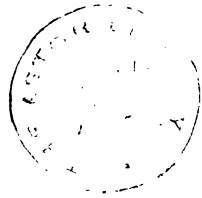

CHAPTER I.

ALGIERS AS A WINTER RESIDENCE.

"All the world is cheered by the sun."
Richard III. i. 2.

THE cry is still—they go.

"Have you then a climate so detestable that in your land no one can venture to remain during the months of winter?" asks the ingenuous Frenchman, who knows so little of the world beyond his own immediate surroundings. Truth as well as patriotism leads us loudly to proclaim that this is not so; that, in spite of the multitudes who quit it, the mother-country is not at any time altogether desolate and deserted—that a few remain behind. Yet it is certain, that year after year, vast and ever-increasing numbers of Englishmen and Englishwomen are to be found, at the first blast of chill October, or the first clinging mist of drear November, turning their backs upon their native land; making the best of their way southward, in search either of health or pleasure; content to sacrifice, for the sake of the sunny skies they hope to find, the traditional but somewhat doubtful comforts of an English winter.

They pass like a wave over Southern Europe, this migratory horde, possessing themselves of express trains by right

of conquest, filling to overflowing the palatial hotels that look upon the Pyrenees, establishing English laws and customs on the Riviera, and crowding the quaint old Italian cities. For the time has long gone by, when a residence at Boulogne, a winter at Tours, or, at most, a few months' stay at Montpellier, was considered all that could possibly be desired for our invalids or valetudinarians. Either climates have changed in our days, or modern ideas have made desires less easy to satisfy—at least it would seem, that for sunshine in winter we have to go farther afield than did our fathers; nor are we altogether sure that Europe itself can satisfy all our demands.

Of Italy, for our invalids especially, we are not quite certain. We have heard of bitter weather at Rome, of snow even at Naples; we may possibly have felt the "tramontana" at Florence, and have had some experience of marble-floored bedchambers and rooms without fireplaces. Scoff as we may at the notion of English comforts, we do not care to feel the need of them. Coal-fires that scorch the face while the marrow freezes, may be matter of reproach to us among foreigners, yet we may surely find a fair retort in wood-fires that refuse to give forth any heat at all, and rooms whose terrible dimensions a score of English furnaces would scarcely suffice to warm. Against the winter climate of the Riviera we certainly cannot find much to say, but it is possible that we may think Cannes dull, pronounce Nice conventional, find Mentone melancholy, and San Remo confined.

Considerations such as these drive us still farther southward in our "flight with the swallows," and land us in a new scene of life and manners on the edge of another con-

tinent. Shall we find in Algiers all that we have pictured to ourselves as desirable for a winter residence?

First, as regards climate, the most important of all considerations for those whose chief object is a "search after sunshine."

Algiers is situated in almost the same latitude as Cadiz and Malaga, that is to say, about a thousand miles due south of Paris, and four hundred miles south of Marseilles. It is natural, then, to expect a warmer climate and a more tropical vegetation than are obtained on the northern shores of the Mediterranean, although, indeed, degrees of latitude and longitude seem to have very little effect upon the actual temperature of a place, unless other circumstances are favourable. For example, within a day or two's journey from Algiers, on the slopes of the Atlas, a climate more severe than any English winter is to be found. Algiers, however, is specially favoured by her position.

The conformation of this part of Northern Africa is very peculiar, consisting of alternate mountain ranges and wide plains in lines parallel with the coast. From the sea-shore itself, rises a wooded range of hills, varying from 500 to 1,300 feet in height, called the Sahel. On the seaward slope of this range lie the town and suburbs of Algiers.

Beyond the Sahel is the vast and curiously flat plain of the Metidja; behind this the lesser Atlas, capped with snow through some months of the year; again desert-like plains, and then the Atlas, keeping guard over the great Sahara.

Algiers then, with the sea in face of her, and the mountains at her back, has the advantage of both so far as her climate is concerned. The cold drying north winds,

which are so great a scourge of Southern France, are converted by their journey over four hundred miles of sunny sea into a cool refreshing breeze. On the other hand, the burning desert wind, the Sirocco, when it reaches Algiers, which is not often, is cooled and tamed by its transit over the icy summits of the Atlas. In spite of this, during the summer months, it is still trying enough both to animal and vegetable life, but in winter it is rarely felt, and then only in a very limited degree.

The winter climate of Algiers is moderate. Dr. A. Mitchell, of Edinburgh, who wrote some interesting papers on the subject in the *British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review*, gives the mean temperature from observations extending through a period of thirteen years to be—

For	November . . .	66·40°
	December . . .	60·82
	January . . .	59·18
	February . . .	59·01
	March	60·15
	April	64·06
	May	69·75

He says—

"The mean annual temperature more nearly approaches that of Malta than that of any of the more ordinary winter resorts. It exceeds it, however, by 2°, Malaga by 3°, Madeira by 4°, Rome by 9°, Nice by 10°, and Pau by 13°. The mean annual temperature of Cairo is higher, but its winter is colder than that of Algiers. The excess of the annual mean over that of Madeira depends upon the greater summer heat of Algiers, since, as regards winter and spring, the two places are almost identical. It follows, therefore, that the difference between the coldest and hottest months, and between spring and summer, will be less in the case of Madeira, but the difference between

winter and spring is less at Algiers, and is indeed less than in any place with the meteorology of which I am acquainted."

The temperature steadily rises for one half the year, viz. from February to August, and steadily declines during the other half, from August to February.

There is in Algiers no sudden chill at sundown, such as is always experienced at Nice, and other winter stations on the Riviera—a certain change, of course, there must be, but it is so gentle that even invalids are not in this country afraid of extending their afternoon rambles, or seen hurrying home, like slipperless Cinderella, if the clock has already struck the hour of return.

"It is the evenness of the temperature even more than its mildness which makes its charm. Eight months of the year—from the beginning of October to the end of May—the weather is delightful, being neither too hot nor too cold. There is no necessity for fires, although every room has a fireplace, which people of European parentage, but who are born here, sometimes make use of. The country is green, flowers bloom, birds sing, all nature rejoices in life and colour, whilst frost and snow being never seen, it is scarcely possible to believe that it is winter."—*Algeria as It Is.*

The following is the account of "Days in December," written by M. Fromentin, whose works on Algeria have earned him the title among French people, of the "Poet of the Sahara:"—

"It is almost impossible to believe that the year is dying—for us who are out of doors from morning till nightfall. Day follows day, but the impression created by the one so exactly repeats that of the preceding, that I am unable to distinguish between them. I lose count of time. It is a long drawn-out state of happiness, unknown to those who live in the agitation of our variable climates. Not a cloud—not a breath to disturb the peace of the heavens. From six in the morning to six in the evening, the sun travels calmly across a spotless space whose colour is true azure. He drops into a clear heaven and disappears, leaving behind him, at the door of his bedchamber, a crimson

point like a dropped rose leaf. Then a light mist covers the foot of the hills as if to hide the transition from day to night, accustoming the eyes to darkness by a tender veil of soft grey. The stars light one by one in the heavens. At first one can count them. Then suddenly the sky is ablaze with them. The night grows luminous as the sunset-glow departs; and when day is fully ended it is replaced but by a solemn chiaro-oscuro. Meanwhile the sea sleeps in a sleep which for a month has been untroubled, save now and then by the keel of a passing ship. Calm and limpid it lies with the transparency, the immobility, the brilliancy of a mirror. Can this in truth be winter?"—*Une Année dans le Sahel.*

People learned in such matters prove that a great deal of rain falls in Algiers, that the actual quantity, in fact, exceeds the rainfall of London. Those who know the climate would scarcely be persuaded that there was not some illusion in the matter, were it not for the long array of figures brought up against them. The notion, in truth, appears perfectly ridiculous, especially when it is remembered that drought invariably prevails in Algiers during the summer months, and that the winter is known as the rainy season. But it must be remembered that the quantity of rain which falls, bears no proportion to the number of days on which it falls, "a fact which has a very direct bearing on the interests of the invalid," says Dr. Mitchell; and for two hundred and sixty-nine rainy days in London, there would be but ninety-five in Algiers, all days being accounted as rainy on which a few drops fall, and the day considered to consist of twenty-four hours.

The experience of the present writer is, that during January and February of the year 1877, there was one showery day, the rest being all brilliant sunshine. It often rains very heavily at night, coming down like a torrent, or an overturned bucket. But even after this, the earth next

morning will be found dry, and the pavements perfectly white. In truth, Algiers, in spite of statistics, must be considered to possess an especially dry climate, and the absence of mosquitoes is a sufficiently good proof of this.

"A climate which is at the same time moist and warm, being considered more beneficial for a particular class of invalids, there may be a wish to accommodate matters when that of Algiers is called damp. Whether it be favourable or prejudicial to consumptive subjects, winter in Algiers is generally dry and bracing."—*Algeria as It Is.*

Dr. Mitchell also says—

"The climate of Algiers must be considered dry and bracing."

Dr. Shaw, who was chaplain to the English factory in Algiers from 1720—30, writes in his travels—

"The Tell, or cultivated parts of this kingdom, lying between 34° and 37° N. lat., enjoy a very wholesome and temperate air, neither too hot and sultry in summer, nor too sharp and cold in winter. During the space of ten years that I attended the factory of Algiers, I found the thermometer only twice contracted to freezing point—then the whole country, which was very unusual, was covered with snow; nor ever knew it rise to sultry weather, unless the wind blew from the Sahara."

The class of invalids, or rather of constitutions, to which the climate of Algiers may be considered suitable, are categorized by Dr. Bodichon as follows:—

"Algiers possesses a climate favourable—

"1. To persons of a dry temperament. It is found that such are easily naturalised.

"2. It is good for old persons, who are much less liable to pulmonary diseases and catarrhs there than in Europe.

"3. For rheumatic subjects. They are much benefited, if not cured, by a residence of some years here.

"4. For lymphatic temperaments. The excess of heat and light is advantageous to them, giving them the tone they require.

"5. For subjects disposed to phthisis, since disorders of the lungs occur much less frequently than in Europe."

Dr. Bodichon, it may be remarked, is looking at the matter rather from the point of view of a French colonizer than an English visitor; that is to say, he contemplates a residence throughout the year, and not a stay of only a few months. He also gives a list of persons to whom he considers the climate will be prejudicial:—

"1. To very corpulent persons.

"2. To persons affected with hypertrophy of the heart or large vessels.

"3. To those suffering from dysentery and organic diseases generally, and especially for all having any malady of the nerves—since the climate increases nervous irritability.

"4. To drunkards, who will pay their penalty in sanguineous congestion and fevers, and for all subject to derangement of their mental faculties."

Dr. Bodichon has also an alarming list of the evil effects of the climate, which, it is to be hoped, may only be applicable to residents of long standing, and are not likely to influence winter visitors, for he assures us that—

"1. The climate inclines to idleness, and to physical and also moral torpor.

"2. That it incites to violence and ferocity—the wind of the desert, every time that it blows with any force, causing an increase of crime, and leaving behind it a trail of murder and suicide.

"3. That it produces selfishness by augmenting the personality."

This climatic action, according to Dr. Bodichon, is felt by Europeans as well as natives. He says—

"It results from an over-excitement of the nervous system and an increase of sensibility to the detriment of reason. The general action of the Sirocco both on vegetation and animal life is parching. It is, therefore, the enemy most to be feared for civilization in Algeria. It brings with it the sand which destroys the fruits of industry, and that irritation of the nervous system which is so pernicious to morality."

Dr. Bodichon lays the wild and naturally lawless disposition of the Arabs entirely to the blame of the climate, and is altogether as hard upon the Sirocco, as English philosophers are apt to be on our own pet evil—the East wind.

For the comfort of winter visitors to Algiers, and the consolation of their anxious friends, it will be well to remember that this pernicious breeze is almost unknown during the colder months. Also it may be some relief to their feelings to hear, on Dr. Bodichon's authority, that "Calvinists and Puritans will be found to resist the baleful effects of this wind better than persons of other persuasions," and therefore advises, "If your colonists cannot be induced to become one or the other, at least try and make them reasonable, and inculcate in them some ideas of moral duty."

With reference to consumptive persons—

"It is admitted by nearly all French physicians who know the Algerian climate, that a residence in Algeria can ameliorate and even cure consumptive patients. Consumption is a disease belonging chiefly to fair races and to cold countries. It is best treated by a residence in a warm country, and by means that tend to give the constitution of the dark race."—*Considérations sur l'Algérie. Dr. Bodichon.*

"Of all the means employed to cure pulmonary consumption, the influence of climate is, without doubt, that which has the largest measure of success. With regard to Algiers we would place it in the first rank, both from the mildness of its climate and the beauty of its site. In a northern climate the deadness of nature and damp fogs produce depression. This moral state does not allow of a sufficient reparation of the vital energies, and assists the development of the tubercles."—*Bulletin de la Société de Climatologie Algérienne. Dr. Puzin.*

Dr. Puzin also says—

"The winds of the S., S.E. and S.W. are refreshed by traversing

the mountains, and rarely reach us charged with dust. The Sirocco only blows at rare intervals, seldom lasts more than a day, and is not specially bad for persons with weak chests."

He also states—

"That the water of Algiers, which is clear, limpid, and very agreeable in taste, is strongly impregnated with carbonate of lime, which is a notably remedial agent in phthisis. Indeed, it is to be remarked that consumption is very little known in countries whose water-supply is strongly charged with this substance."

Dr. Mitchell, after patient investigation of the matter, comes to the conclusion that phthisis is a disease considerably rarer in Algiers than in Europe or North America; also that other diseases of the respiratory organs are much less frequent. And Dr. Jackson, in his "Medical Climatology," remarks—

"As a resort from the inclement season of northern Europe for persons threatened with pulmonary consumption, Algiers is deservedly in good reputation. The climate is far from being of a relaxing character: on the contrary, it combines with its usual mildness and equability, a decidedly bracing and tonic influence. Consumptive patients in whom there is a well-marked deposit of crude tubercle may pass one or more winters in Algiers with advantage, under circumstances which afford nature the most ample leisure for repairing the disorganized structure. The sooner the patient is placed under its influence, the more likely is the result to be beneficial. But when the disease has gone beyond what I have mentioned, Algiers is not to be recommended."

Indeed, in cases where the disease is approaching its fatal termination, it seems simple cruelty on the part of medical men, to drive the patient away from the loving care of his own family circle, to die in a strange land!

Happily, Algiers has not yet become the resort of this hopeless class of invalid, and the winter-visitor is spared

the sad sights and harrowing scenes which he so often encounters at Mentone, and other health-stations of the Riviera. The class of invalids who chiefly frequent Algiers are persons affected by asthma, bronchial affections, and rheumatism, and these, who would be sufferers in their own land of fogs and damp, can, in the pure sunny climate of Algiers, scarcely be classed under that heading.

"There is a health-giving influence in a bright atmosphere and cloudless sky which is not fully appreciated. Light has a higher power in the functions of the animal economy than we are apt to think, and proofs are not wanting. Deprive the tadpole of its influence, nourish it as you will, and it will remain a tadpole still. But it is in the vegetable kingdom that we have the clearest manifestation of its working. In plants we find the secretions developed in greater perfection according to its intensity. Deprived of it, we find them flowerless, fruitless, and with small and stunted leaves. Had we no other proof, we should be authorised in inferring that that which is so potent on vegetable life, is not inert on animal life. The physiology of the two kingdoms is ever more or less closely associated, and that which stimulates the flower to expand its petals, giving as it were a welcome to the vivifying influence, is also, though perhaps more obscurely, a stimulus to man.

"Every man has experienced the gayness and brightness of spirits which a clear sunny day produces, and no man who has known the horrors of a London fog will be unable to paint the reverse of the picture, but it is a question if this bright, mental atmosphere which comes from a bright physical one, is not the direct result of its stimulating action on us simply as animals. Life within us is intensified, and the *mens sana* is tinged with the impressions of the *corpus sanum*."—*On the Curative Value of the Algerian Climate. Dr. A. Mitchell.*

There can be no doubt that the first, the chief, the ever-present charm of Algiers is its beautiful climate. At the same time, again to quote Dr. Mitchell's pamphlet—

"No climate is perfect, and the invalid who seeks Algiers expecting to find nothing but uninterrupted serenity will be disappointed.

Bad weather occurs there as elsewhere; but, on the whole, figures and experience justify me in saying, that few climates are superior, and more likely to benefit that class of patients who seek for health in a more genial temperature, and a less cloudy atmosphere than our own."

Before quitting the medical atmosphere it would perhaps not be out of place to mention some small matters of hygiene, which are recommended by physicians to travellers in this as in other warm countries.

It seems perhaps superfluous to say, Do not walk out in the burning sun without an umbrella; but it would be well for English travellers to remember, that an umbrella cannot be spared them as an article of dress in Algiers any more than in their own country, though its use is somewhat different, and to observe how thoroughly the natives, who understand these matters, shelter their heads from the fierce African sun.

Smoked glasses, *but not blue*, are also recommended for the eyes.

"The diet of the European in Algiers," says Dr. Bodichon, "should be tonic." For persons disposed to consumption he advises plentiful feeding on meat, fish, oysters, lobsters, and other substances containing iodine, and the use of port-wine or claret as a beverage—tea being avoided, "since it increases perspiration."

Time to be spent in Algiers from the end of October to the first days of June.

This, with a general recommendation of air, regular, gentle exercise, and *sun-baths*, he believes would in most cases be found efficacious. For he says, in conclusion—

"Cure should be sought by hygiene rather than by physic. Consumption is a constitutional disease, and constitutions cannot be changed by physic, though they may be modified by hygiene."

As a pleasure resort—as opposed to a health resort—Algiers can certainly not presume to rival her opposite neighbour, Nice.

For those who are lovers of nature, who drink in the beauty of a glorious landscape with delight, and find a charm in the quiet pleasures of the fields and lanes, Algiers has, indeed, an exhaustless store of attractions. In the ever-changing yet changeless beauty that meets him on every side, in the glowing colours of sea and sky, in the luxuriant wealth of wild-flowers that grow in his path, in the interest and mystery that cling about the Eastern people among whom he is suddenly plunged, the traveller who is a lover of the picturesque, who has anything of an artist's eye—though he, maybe, lack the artist's hand—must surely rest content.

He can scarcely be able to regret the promenade—which is not; the shabby little Hyde Park in miniature—which is not; the Parisian toilettes—which are not—and other delights which Nice offers to the votaries of fashion. Perhaps it would not be too much to say that at Algiers, fashion is not.

There are wonderfully few French visitors at Algiers; those who come, invariably pronounce the place to be *triste*, and complain that there are no *distractions*.

There is a fairly good opera given three times a week during winter, but the absence of the promenade and the toilettes is an insuperable objection to French enjoyment.

In truth, Algiers is being gradually taken possession of by the English; the hotels are filled with English to the exclusion of other nationalities; the pretty villas of the suburbs are during the winter months occupied entirely by

English. Several English families have residences to which they return year after year for their winter season, forming what is beginning to be known as the English colony.

There is, therefore, a certain amount of quiet gaiety always accessible to English visitors, for the national colony of Algiers seems to be possessed with a more sociable and friendly spirit towards strangers, than is usually put to the credit of English people, and Lieutenant-Colonel Playfair, the English consul, sets the example of geniality and kindness. It may be as well to state, for the sake of those visitors who wish to enter into society in Algiers, that the foreign custom prevails, of new arrivals being expected to call on the older inhabitants.

General Chanzy, the Governor, following the example of his predecessor Marshal MacMahon, distinguishes himself by his hospitality towards English winter visitors. The Préfet of Algiers has lately married an English lady. Small subscription balls are not infrequent among the visitors at the Hôtel d'Orient, and, although unmarried ladies under thirty, and gentlemen whose dancing powers are not impeded by asthma, are at a premium, the English colony, and the English birds of passage manage to keep themselves tolerably well amused. Perhaps among the attractions of Algiers it would be a mistake to omit that which fills so large a place in the Englishman's beau-idéal—sport. Game of all kinds is plentiful in Algeria—partridges, hares, snipe, wild-ducks, and wild-boars are to be found within easy distances of Algiers itself; while lions and panthers to be hunted down still attract the more adventurous spirits southward. In conclusion, we again quote Dr. Mitchell, who looks at the *agréments* of Algiers from the invalid's point of view :—

"With difficulty, if at all, will the European traveller find a spot on earth where natural beauties so combine with those of man's creation to please and interest him. And it is not of small moment to the invalid that pleasure and interest meet him at every step, that he has neither fatigue nor risk to run in seeking them, that they are of a nature to amuse without exciting him, adapted to all tastes, and to all capabilities. In this point of view, Algiers contrasts most favourably with other places of resort, where the objects of interest are chilly cathedrals, cold picture-galleries and such-like, which fashion demands that the stranger shall visit, whether he be an invalid or in health, and for which he must assume a spurious enthusiasm if, from deficiency of nature or education, he lacks the taste. It is of real importance to the invalid that he should leave his room, not full of some fatiguing excursion, but simply to be in the open air, to wander about where his fancy may lead him, sure of finding himself gratified and amused."

The writer can offer no further suggestions for the comfort of the winter traveller to Algiers, other than the recommendation to be provided with a certain amount of warm clothing in case of a few days' cold, and the earnest advice not to leave too early in the spring, so as to run the risk of exchanging African sunshine for English east winds.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE ROAD TO ALGIERS.

"Look on fertile France."
1 *Henry VI.* iii. 3.

Paris to Marseilles, express, in 16¼ hours.

THE through fare from London to Algiers is, first-class, £10 9s. 6d.; second-class, £7 18s.; but as the French express trains are composed of first-class carriages only, those travellers who wish to make the journey from Paris to Marseilles at all rapidly, will be compelled to take first-class tickets for that portion of the route, not only for themselves, but for any servants they may have with them.

The steamers of the Messageries Maritimes, the best line, start from Marseilles at five o'clock every Saturday afternoon, being in correspondence with the express which leaves Paris on Friday evening at eight o'clock. It is thus barely possible to leave London on Friday morning and to proceed straight on to Algiers, but as we presume few travellers for pleasure, would care to undertake so fatiguing a journey without rest, or indeed to pass through Paris without spending at least a few hours in that most attractive of capitals, we will imagine that on Thursday morning at latest, a start

has been made from Charing Cross or Victoria, that Thursday night and Friday have been passed in Paris, and on Friday evening our travellers have arrived at the station of the Chemin de fer de Lyon, ready for their flight due south.

But to those whose time is not very limited, a journey across France at a less rapid rate—a journey, as the French people would call it, *en paresseux*—is very much more to be recommended, as on this route will be passed several interesting and remarkable spots, each of them worthy at least of a day or two's visit.

A through-ticket admits of *arrêts* at various points without extra charge, and luggage should in any case be registered straight on to Marseilles from Paris.

Whether the breaking of the journey can be recommended to persons in ill-health, depends very much on the weather of the time-being, also on the invalid's capability of enduring long journeys, and on the possibility of securing a *lit coupé* for the night travel. If the weather should not be immoderately cold, and rooms with fires in them are ordered by letter or telegram at each stopping-place, it is probable that two or three shorter journeys would, in most cases, be found less fatiguing than one long one, and in this way night-travelling would be altogether avoided. Lyons, the most convenient and almost a half-way halt between Paris and Marseilles, will be found an agreeable resting-place; and although the town possesses no monuments of special interest, the extreme beauty of its situation, and its position as the second city of France, make it well worthy of a visit, while those who, regarding it as a great manufacturing centre, expect to find in it a second Leeds or Manchester, will be pleasantly disappointed with the cleanliness of its

broad handsome streets, and the unsullied purity of its clear blue sky.

LYONS. *Hotels.*—Grand Hôtel de Lyon, a very fine hotel, but a long way from the station. Grand Hôtel Collet, in the same street. Hôtel de l'Europe, Place Louis le Grand, also very good, and much nearer the station; rooms from 3 fr., dinner 4 fr., service 1 fr. Hôtel des Négociants, Hôtel du Havre et du Luxembourg; dinner, 3½ fr., good. Hôtel Michel, Hôtel d'Angleterre et des Deux Mondes, Hôtel de l'Univers, all in the Cour Napoléon, near the station.

Fiacres.—Two-horse carriages of the Compagnie des Petits Maîtres, 1 fr. 25 c. per course; by the hour, 1 fr. 50 c. for first hour, following hours, 1 fr. 25 c., luggage free; outside the town, 2 fr. After midnight, all fares ½ fr. more. Carriages of other companies dearer.

Hotel omnibuses meet the trains.

There are several railway stations at Lyons; the principal one, that at which the traveller should alight, is the Perrache.

Lyons is a city of 324,000 inhabitants, the chief seat of the silk manufacture of France. It is finely situated at the confluence of the Rhone and Saône, the two rivers flowing through the whole length of the city, while it is surrounded on all sides by a natural fortification of hills.

The Romans, perceiving at once the extraordinary advantages of the site, built a city here (Lugdunum), and it became one of their chief strongholds in Gaul.

There are unfortunately scarcely any traces of the ancient town left, but we read in history of the important part it played in the early ages of the Christian era, and of the terrible persecution which took place here, under Marcus Aurelius, in the second century. Of the vast amphitheatre which stood, we are told, on the height to the south of the city, and was capable of holding fifty thousand persons—the chief scene of the martyrdoms—not a vestige now remains, although the ruins are mentioned by Coryat in his

travels in 1611; and the only relic of the terrible scenes there enacted, is in the name of the river that flows so placidly by the broad and sunny quays—the Saône or Sangona, red from the blood of the slain. In this persecution perished the venerable Pothinus, first Bishop of Lyons, a man over ninety years of age; Blandina, whose name has come down to us as a model of heroic constancy under cruel suffering; and many others, the number of victims amounting to several thousands.

During the Middle Ages, Lyons became a rich and important manufacturing town, one of her merchants being that Peter Waldo, who in the twelfth century first publicly preached in France against the corruptions of the Roman Church, and being, with his followers, driven from his native city, spread his opinions through Southern France, Switzerland, and the valleys of the Alps.

In revolutionary times Lyons was the scene of frightful tragedies. Rich, prosperous, and loyal, she seemed specially marked out for the cupidity and bloodthirstiness of the Jacobin party. In the year 1793 the town withstood a severe siege, marked by many deeds of heroism, but being compelled to surrender through famine, it was given over to the ravages of the Republicans, who reaped a terrible vengeance in it.

"On the ruins of this infamous city," said Barère, when he announced in Paris that Lyons had fallen, "shall be raised a monument to the eternal glory of the Convention, and on it shall be engraved the inscription, *Lyons made war on freedom, Lyons is no more!*" The Revolutionary Tribunal did their best to accomplish the work thus laid out for them. The finest quarters of the city, containing the

handsomest private buildings in France, were razed to the ground, no less than £70,000 being paid out of the public treasury for the labour of "demolitions."

Collot d'Herbois, an actor whose performances had in early years been hissed at the theatre of Lyons, was appointed Proconsul. With him was associated the notorious Fouché, and during the reign of these two worthies, upwards of six thousand persons suffered death in the city from the guillotine, from drowning, and from wholesale fusillades, which were found convenient as a means of despatching from one to two hundred victims at the same time!

Lyons has been almost rebuilt within the present century, and is a fine modern town of broad, clean, and regular streets, and it possesses two or three remarkably handsome open squares or "places."

Of these the *Place Louis le Grand* is the finest. It is one of the most spacious squares in Europe. The houses surrounding it were destroyed during the Revolution, but were afterwards restored, and the statue of Louis XIV., which adorns the centre of the square, was erected in 1825.

The *Place Napoléon* has a bronze statue of Napoleon I. Adjoining this *place* is the broad *Cours Napoléon*, planted with trees. Here is situated the Perrache Railway Station. Between these two *places* lies the most fashionable quarter of the city. In the *Place des Terreaux* is the *Hôtel de Ville*, where the Revolutionary Tribunal held its meetings, while on the adjacent *place*, the guillotine was, at the same time, employed in its deadly work.

This was also the spot on which the young Marquis de Cinq-Mars, favourite of Louis XIII., and would-be rival of Richelieu, was executed in the year 1642.

This unfortunate young man, raised by the will of the minister into power, and intended to be used as a tool for

governing the King, fell, after a short struggle against the iron despotism of Richelieu, into his wily enemy's hands, and being convicted of treasonable intercourse with Spain, was, with his friend and accomplice, De Thou, dragged by Richelieu to Lyons, and beheaded on the Place des Terreaux. At the time of his death Cinq-Mars was twenty-two years of age.

The *Hôtel des Beaux Arts*, or Museum, is also in the Place des Terreaux. It is free to the public every day from nine till three. Under the arches of the court are some interesting Roman remains—altars, sculptures, inscriptions, &c. On the first floor is a picture gallery, containing some Roman mosaics and several very fine paintings; in the Salle des Anciens Maîtres, notably an Ascension (156) by *Pietro Perugino*, which is considered to be his masterpiece; the Scourging of Christ (169), by *Palma Giovane;* Madonna and Child bestowing flowers on the Emperor Maximilian and his consort (73), by *Dürer*. This is a celebrated picture painted at Venice in 1506, brought from Vienna to Paris by Napoleon I., and afterwards presented to the city of Lyons.

On the story above is the "Galerie des Peintres Lyonnais," in which are a portrait of Jacquard, inventor of the loom which bears his name, and the busts of other celebrated natives of the town.

The *Musée Archéologique*, on the first floor, contains in the entrance room to the left, the brazen tablets on which is engraved the speech delivered by the Emperor Claudius in the year A.D. 48 before the Roman Senate, in defence of the measure which bestowed citizenship on the Gauls, and in the central saloon many Roman coins, bronzes, &c., with some antique jewellery found in the neighbourhood. There are also natural-history collections and a library in the same building, but the town library (*Bibliothèque*), comprising 150,000 volumes, is in a separate building on the banks of the Rhone.

The *Grand Théâtre* is a handsome building, the interior clean and comfortable, and the performances good.

Lyons possesses many churches, but few that offer any attractions to the traveller.

The *Cathedral* is situated on the right bank of the Saône, adjoining

the handsome modern Palais de Justice. The church dates from the thirteenth century, has a good central tower and old stained-glass windows, but the general effect of the building is gloomy. In the Bourbon Chapel (first to right of entrance) are some fine sculptures, and the cathedral also possesses a clock of very curious and elaborate mechanism, which is exhibited to strangers.

On the opposite bank of the Saône is the little church of the *Abbaie d'Ainay*, one of the oldest in France, dating from the tenth century, and having then been constructed from the ruins of some ancient edifice. The vaulted roof is supported by four antique columns of granite. Beneath the church are some Roman dungeons, where it is supposed early Christian martyrs may have been confined before their execution.

The pilgrimage church of *Notre-Dame des Fourvières*, on the height above the town, is well worthy of a visit, for the sake of the extremely beautiful view to be obtained from the terrace before it. The church itself is a modern building containing a "miraculous" image of the Virgin, with numerous votive tablets; but the view will, on a clear day, well repay the fatigue of the pilgrimage.

The route is between the *Palais de Justice* and the *Cathedral*, through narrow, steep streets, past the hospital of *Les Antiquailles*, then to the right by the *Passage Abrégé*, through vineyards and gardens strewn with fragments of Roman masonry, to the *Observatoire*, a small wooden tower near the church. From the *Observatoire* (admission ½ fr.) the view is even finer than from the terrace of Notre-Dame, embracing the panorama of the city, with its two rivers and countless bridges, the encircling belt of wooded hills bristling with fortresses, and, in the distance, on every side, the vague mysterious outlines of far-away mountain ranges.

The environs of Lyons are well worth exploring, and the traveller will find facilities of all kinds for making short excursions, in the way of local trains and omnibuses, while steamers ply on both rivers.

An interesting point is the confluence of the Rhone and Saône, a mile and a half from the Perrache Railway Station (omnibus from *Place de la Charité* to the *Pont de Mulatière*, where the rivers are separated by a breakwater). The different characters of the two streams are very remarkable, as they flow side by side, joined but not commingled, the Rhone clear, rapid, and impetuous, the Saône still and turbid. Certain old writers have been pleased to find in the phenomenon a symbol of matrimony.

On the left bank of the Rhone is the *Parc de la Tête d'Or*, a fine botanical garden and pleasure ground.

AVIGNON.

Hotels.—De l'Europe, dinner, 4 fr.; De Luxembourg, dinner, 3 fr. Both very good and comfortable; both a long way from the station. Omnibus, 50 c.

Avignon is a place of remarkable interest, crowded with associations, both historic and poetical, and in its style altogether unique among French towns. Indeed, it is difficult for the traveller who visits it for the first time, and is conveyed to his hotel through the narrow and tortuous streets, destitute for the most part of footways, and bordered by ancient houses, whose lower windows are all defended by stout iron screens, such as Michel Angelo designed for the old palaces of Florence, not to believe that he is in the land of Dante and Giotto. In truth, Avignon is much more Italian than French, and up to the year 1791 was a Papal possession, a nest in the wilderness, which the sovereign pontiffs kept as a refuge in case of troublous times at home; and for nearly seventy years, from 1309 to 1377, they held their court here, and dispensed the spiritual government of Europe from the gloomy palace on the rock which dominates the town, and which, from the railway, forms its most conspicuous object.

The *Papal Palace*, a fortress with walls a hundred feet high, is now used as a barrack, but can be visited on application to the *concierge*. It is supposed to have been erected by Clement V., the first Pope who reigned at Avignon. Rienzi was imprisoned here, in the Tour des Oubliettes, in the year 1351. In the rear is *La Glacière*, a square tower which was once the prison of the Inquisition, and where, in October, 1791, sixty innocent persons, men, women, and children, were murdered by the revolutionary party with circumstances of great atrocity.

A visit to the *Glacière* is graphically described by Dickens :—

"We went to see the ruins of the dreadful rooms in which the Inquisition used to sit. Passing through a courtyard, among groups of soldiers, we turned off by a gate and entered a narrow court, rendered narrower by fallen stones and heaps of rubbish, part of it choking up the mouth of a ruined subterranean passage that once communicated (or is said to have done so) with another castle on the opposite bank of the river. Close to this courtyard is a dungeon—we stood within it in another minute—in the dismal tower *Des Oubliettes*, where Rienzi was imprisoned, fastened by an iron chain to the very wall that stands there now, but shut out from the sky which now looks down into it. A few steps brought us to the cachots, in which the prisoners of the Inquisition were confined. On, into a vaulted chamber now used as a store-room, once the chapel of the Holy Office. The place where the tribunal sat was plain. The platform might have been removed but yesterday. Conceive the parable of the Good Samaritan having been painted on the wall of one of these Inquisition chambers! But it was, and may be traced there yet. Higher up in the jealous wall are niches where the faltering replies of the accused were heard and noted down. Many of them had been brought out of the very cell we had just looked into, so awfully; along the same stone passage. We had trodden in their very footsteps. . . . Les oubliettes de l'Inquisition! My blood ran cold as I looked down into the vaults, where these forgotten creatures, with recollections of the world outside—of wives, friends, children, brothers, starved to death and made the stones ring with their unavailing groans. But the thrill I felt on seeing the accursed wall below decayed and broken through, and the sun shining in through its gaping wounds, was like a sense of victory and triumph. I felt exalted with the proud delight of living in these degenerate times to see it—as if I were the hero of some high achievement! The light in the doleful vaults was typical of the light that has streamed in on all persecution in God's name, but which is not yet at its noon! . . . I walked round the building on the outside in a sort of dream, and yet with the delightful sense of having awakened from it, of which the light down in the vaults had given me the assurance. The immense thickness and giddy height of the walls, the enormous strength of the massive towers, the great extent of the building, its gigantic proportions, frowning aspect, and barbarous irregularity, awaken awe and wonder. The recollection of its opposite old uses: an impregnable fortress, a luxurious palace, a horrible prison, a place of torture, the court of the Inquisition—at one and the same time a house of feasting, fighting, religion and blood—gives to every stone in its huge form a fearful interest, and imparts new

meaning to its incongruities. I could think of little, then and long afterwards, but the sun in the dungeons. The palace coming down to be the lounging place of noisy soldiers, and being forced to echo to their rough talk and common oaths, and to have their garments fluttering from its dirty windows, was some reduction of its state and something to rejoice at; but the day in its cells and the sky for the roof of its chambers of cruelty—that was its desolation and defeat! If I had seen it in a blaze from ditch to rampart, I should have felt that not that light, nor all the light in all the fire that burns, could waste it like the sunbeams in its secret council-chamber and its prisons."

Near the palace, and in front of the *Glacière*, is the conspicuous *Cathedral of Notre-Dame.* It dates from the fourteenth century, with a porch of a much earlier period, and has been recently restored.

It contains the monument of Pope John XXII., who died at Avignon in 1334, and that of Benedict XII. (died 1342) in the left aisle. The hill beside the Cathedral is laid out in a pleasant garden, with a point of view on a cluster of rocks in the centre.

The prospect from this spot is charming and very extensive. In the garden is a statue to Jean Althen, erected in 1846, out of gratitude to him for having introduced the cultivation of madder, now the chief produce of the district, and extensively used as a dye for the French military trousers. Opposite the Papal Palace stands the old *Mairie*—the mint of the Papal period. It is now used as a *Conservatoire de Musique*, the old coat of arms remaining above the ancient doorway. In the Rue Calade is the Musée, open daily, fee 1 fr.

On the ground-floor is a good collection of Roman antiquities, mostly found in the neighbourhood. On the first floor a picture gallery, in which are several fine paintings, three small pictures attributed to *Holbein*, Madonna (80), *Lor. di Credi*, Crucifixion (101),

Erckhout, &c., with a collection of the works of the Vernet family, all natives of Avignon, with a good Mazeppa, by *Horace Vernet*, the most celebrated of the name, many of whose subjects are Algerian.

There are also a library and a valuable miscellaneous museum.

In the garden behind the building is a monument erected by an Englishman to the memory of Petrarch's Laura—her tomb in the Church des Cordeliers having been destroyed during the Revolution.

There is perhaps no association of greater interest in Avignon, than that which clings about the names of Petrarch and the lady whom his verses have made immortal. She lived and died here, and it was at the Church of St. Clare in Avignon that the youthful Petrarch first saw, and was enamoured of her. But his attachment was of the most romantic kind. At the time when she so took his heart by storm she was already a wife, though only in her nineteenth year, and we have no reason for believing that through the whole of her honoured and honourable life, she ever gave the devoted poet the slightest token of her regard. But neither in life nor after her death did her image ever fade from his mind—neither time, nor absence, nor even a meeting when youth had passed away from both lady and lover, could rob him of the sweet enchantment! To him she was ever the peerless lady, the ideal of all that was beautiful and good, the perfection of womanhood. She died of the plague, which was raging in 1348 in Provence, and no less than ninety sonnets, the most touching and graceful of the poet's productions, were written after this event, *In morte di Madonna Laura*.

The vale and fountain of Vaucluse, celebrated by Petrarch, and where he bought a small house and garden, can be

visited from Avignon, either by carriage direct or by taking train to

Lisle-sur-Sorgue station on the Cavaillon branch railway; fares 2 fr. 70 c., 2 fr., 1 fr. 50 c. Thence drive or walk three miles to the village of Vaucluse (Hôtel de Laure).

Petrarch's house exists no longer, and the magnificent forest of oaks which in his time surrounded it, is now replaced by olive-groves and vineyards; but the laurels which he planted and loved as namesakes of his fair one remain. They, or their descendants, are still pointed out to the admiration of visitors.

NISMES, though not on the direct route from Paris to Marseilles, is so very little out of it, and is so well worthy of visiting, that few persons travelling at leisure would care to pass it by. It can be reached either by carriage from Avignon, in which case the beautiful Roman aqueduct of the Pont du Gard can be seen on the way; or by railway—main line as far as Tarascon, where carriages are changed.

From Tarascon to Nismes, three-quarters of an hour; fares, 3 fr. 15 c., 2 fr. 25 c., 1 fr. 70 c.

NISMES.—Hôtel de Luxembourg, on the Place; dinner 4 fr., service 1 fr. Cheval Blanc, opposite the Arena. Hôtel et Restaurant Manivet, opposite Maison Carrée. Hôtel de la Méditerranée. Hôtel des Arts, near railway. Town omnibus, 25 c.

This town, which was an important Roman station, is chiefly remarkable for the beauty and perfect preservation of the Roman relics. They are all within easy reach of the railway station, and may be visited in a very short time, but the town itself is bright and pleasant, and the traveller would not regret a couple of days or so spent at it, provided that the mistral, or north wind, is not blowing at the time.

To this wind, peculiarly strong, and cutting almost as an English north-easter, all this portion of France is subject. While it is blowing, neither Avignon nor Nismes would be a desirable halting-place, especially for an invalid. To such, in this case, we can only say, pull your warmest wraps about you, and hasten with the swallows, south. But, as a rule, the mistral is only felt in any force in the spring, and during autumn and early winter, the climate of Provence justifies all that has been said and sung in its praise.

The road from the railway station across the *Place* leads in a very few minutes to the *Arena*, or Amphitheatre, which is, compared with other buildings of the same kind, in a marvellous state of preservation. It is built of stone, and has a double row of sixty arches, with columns between each, the four entrances projecting a little. The walls are seventy-four feet high, the upper gallery is about a quarter of a mile in circumference, and the building is supposed to have held about thirty-two thousand persons. Though little more than half the size of the Coliseum at Rome, it is as a ruin more perfect, and as a building more beautiful. It is supposed to have been built by Antoninus Pius, about 140 B.C.

The next object of interest, which will be seen on the right hand, is the *Maison Carrée*, an ancient temple supported by thirty Corinthian columns, and dating from the time of Augustus or Antoninus Pius. It was converted in the Middle Ages into a church, then used as a town-hall, and is now a museum, in which are a collection of antiquities and a gallery with several good pictures. 1 fr. entrance. The *concierge* lives opposite.

From thence, turning left by the Canal, the visitor reaches the *Jardin de la Fontaine*, a charmingly laid-out promenade, with pleasant shady walks climbing the sides of a wooded hill.

In the garden, close to the Café, is the *Nymphæum*, or, as it is popularly called, the Temple of Diana, a fine vaulted building with niches for statues, and containing numerous busts and fragments of ancient masonry. Here, too, are the Roman Baths excavated by Louis XIV. and ornamented with statues. The baths contain a large peristyle with low columns, and enclose the spring which supplies Nismes with water.

The *concierge* at the entrance of the garden keeps the key of the Nymphæum and Baths. 1 fr.

On the hill above the garden is an old Roman tower, the *Tourmagne*, from which an excellent view of the town and surrounding country is obtained. Key at a small red house to the right on the way up.

The *Pont du Gard*, unless seen on the road from Avignon, will occupy an afternoon. Carriage, there and back, 12 fr. It is a bridge and aqueduct over the river Gard, remarkable from having three tiers of arches in a most perfect state of preservation. Indeed, it is considered to be the finest Roman aqueduct in existence. It is supposed to have been built by Agrippa, general of Augustus, and was intended to supply Nismes with water from the springs of Airan, near St. Quentin, a distance of fourteen miles. It has recently been undergoing restoration.

Nismes has a population of sixty thousand, one quarter of whom are Protestant. It has frequently been the scene of fierce religious struggles, and suffered severely under the persecution of Louis XIV. On the spot now occupied by the theatre, Jean Cavalier, the young Camisard leader, laid down his sword after his long and heroic struggle at the head of his Protestant peasants, obtaining honourable terms for himself and his followers from Marshal Villars.

The journey from Nismes to Marseilles is but a short one, slightly delayed by the unavoidable change of carriages at Tarascon. Beyond this town the vine and the olive, now seen in abundance for the first time, proclaim the sunny land of the South; but those to whom the olive is a new acquaintance will probably be disappointed with it. Its sombre grey hue is at first sight not pleasing, and flat landscapes of olive gardens planted in formal rows, are apt to seem dismal in colouring. To be appreciated, the olive foliage should be seen in masses, on a sloping hillside, relieved here and there with the bright tints of the orange-tree, or some other vivid green. Then its delicate and tender hues, standing out from a background of cloudless blue sky, are very

beautiful. Indeed, the olive, like the face of a friend, grows more beautiful from intimate acquaintance, and in the end is found to have a charm fully as great as that of its more brilliant rivals.

After passing Arles (Hôtel du Nord and Hôtel du Forum), a place also possessing numerous Roman remains, but of less interest than Nismes, a somewhat uninteresting country is traversed by the railway, until, as the train emerges from the long tunnel of Pas-des-Lanciers, the longest in France, all necks, or rather all necks belonging to travellers to whom the route is a new one, are eagerly strained for a first glimpse of the Mediterranean.

Suddenly it bursts upon the view, a rippling mass of colour, or, as often as not, without even a ripple upon its surface, a sheet of deepest blue, lying softly, like some regal mantle laid upon the land. To see it thus for the first time in its glorious intensity of colouring, under the smiling blue of a true southern sky, is a vision not easily forgotten; and the delight of it and the gladness seem perhaps all the greater, by way of contrast, if the traveller has left but a few hours behind him, the gloom of winter. If he is so favoured in his first introduction to the sunny sea, it will go far to keep it in his pleasant memories, even though in after times, it may not look at him with so friendly and calm a face.

MARSEILLES. *Hotels.*—Grand Hôtel de Marseille; Grand Hôtel du Louvre et de la Paix, facing south and with lift; Hôtel de Noailles—all fine and excellently arranged hotels in the Cannebière Prolongée, the principal street of Marseilles. Dinner, 4 fr. 50 c.; attendance, 1 fr. Hôtel du Petit Louvre, Rue Cannebière; Hôtel des Colonies, Rue Vaucon. Dinner, 3 fr. 50 c. Good and comfortable.

Fiacres.—One-horse, 1 fr. 50 c. per course; 2 fr. 25 c. for first hour,

2 fr. for succeeding hours. Two-horse carriages, 2 fr. per course; 2 fr. 50 c. for first hour, and 2 fr. for each succeeding hour. From 6 P.M. to 6 A.M., one-horse, 1 fr. 75 c.; two-horse carriage, 2 fr. 50 c. per course. Each article of baggage, 25 c. A tariff should be given by every driver to the person engaging him, as in Paris.

Boats in the Port Ancien, at the end of the Rue Cannebière, 1½ fr. for first hour, 1 fr. for each succeeding hour.

Marseilles, a city of three hundred thousand inhabitants, is the principal seaport of France, and its harbour presents a scene of the greatest animation, being crowded with vessels from all parts of the world, whilst its quays are thronged by a motley company of sailors of every nation, and every colour, among whom the fair-bearded Englishman and the tawny Lascar seem to be predominant, while the ear is assailed with a perfect Babel of languages, in which a kind of hybrid Italian succeeds in getting the upper hand; indeed, the patois of the Marseillais has a certain Italian sound about it. It is the old *langue d'oc* as opposed to the *langue d'oyl* of the north. There are very few sights to be seen in Marseilles, beyond the ever-moving interest of the port, with its irregular pile of old white houses, perched, as it seems, one on the top of the other for a look sea-ward, and the beauty of the island-studded harbour. An extremely fine view of the whole may be obtained from the church of *Notre-Dame de la Garde*, which is situated on a height above the Port Ancien, from which several paths lead to it, but the ascent is somewhat fatiguing. The view from the *Résidence Impériale*, a house built by the late emperor, but never inhabited, is a fine one. It is reached by following the quay on the left side of the old port.

There is a museum—*Musée de Longchamps*—in the boule-

vard of the same name, which contains, besides other collections, a picture gallery with some paintings by ancient and modern masters.

There are also some rather remarkable pictures in the hall of the *Consigne*, or office of the health authorities, the entrance to which is a gate at the far end of the Port Ancien. Fee 50 c.

The Cholera on board the Frigate *Melpomone*, *Horace Vernet*. The Chevalier Rose directing the Burial of those who have died of the Plague, *Guérin*. The Plague at Milan, a relief in marble, *Pujet*. Bishop Belsunce during the Plague of 1720, *Gérard*. The Frigate *Justine* returning from the East with the Plague on board, *Tanneurs*.

A statue of Bishop Belsunce has been erected on the boulevard of the same name turning out of the Cannebière. This brave and devoted pastor, during the terrible plague which ravaged Marseilles in 1720, carrying off some forty thousand persons, continued his labours of love in the midst of the dead and dying, encouraging others by his example even more than by his words, and being himself through the whole pestilence saved from attack.

Pope, in his "Essay on Man," devotes a couple of lines to celebrate him :—

> "Why drew Marseilles' good bishop purer breath
> When nature sickened and each gale was death?"

Marseilles has been almost rebuilt, and is now a fine modern town, retaining little of its old picturesque character, except in the neighbourhood of the old Port. What it has lost in quaintness, it has no doubt gained in healthiness.

CHAPTER III.

ARRIVAL AT ALGIERS.—DULL AND USEFUL INFORMATION.

"Le soleil se levait, Alger nous apparut,
Salut terre d'Afrique, à ton beau ciel salut!
Salut! Jamais l'hiver en déplaisant visage,
En soufflant en tes doigts n'aborde ton rivage.
C'est toujours le printemps aux riantes couleurs
Qui pare tes vallons en les semant de fleurs."

* * *

"Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies."

Tennyson.

THE steamers from Algiers, both of the Messageries Maritimes and Valery Companies, start at five o'clock on Saturday afternoons.

The Valery have an extra packet on Tuesday at the same hour.

The fares are, from Marseilles to Algiers, 1st class, 80 fr.; 2nd class, 60 fr. There are also other lines of steamers cheaper, but not so good.

The vessels of the Messagerie and Valery Companies are fine boats, extremely well arranged, and the food provided on both, for those who have sea appetites, is excellent; but the Messagerie boats are the largest, and altogether the most comfortable, though somewhat slower than the others. The movement is felt less in them, and the cabins are fitted up, for the accommodation of families, with two, three, or

four berths, according to requirements. These should be secured beforehand; and luggage must be registered, or the companies do not hold themselves responsible for it. The average passage is thirty-six hours, and, as a rule, except in the Gulf of Lyons, which has an evil reputation, no great inconvenience will be experienced even by indifferent sailors. But the Mediterranean is, like all inland seas, subject to very sudden squalls, and at times extremely bad weather is encountered. The Mediterranean is what is called a choppy sea, and many persons who have crossed the Atlantic without discomfort, suffer from their passage across the sunny southern pond.

The vessels take a due southern course, passing between the islands of Minorca and Majorca about twelve hours after leaving Marseilles, and sighting the coast of Spain. Long before dawn, on the second day of the voyage, the pleasing and welcome intelligence is circulated, "Algiers is in sight," and the traveller, seized with a sudden passion for early rising, hastily shakes himself out of his morning slumbers, and hurries on to deck.

If he fail to do so, he loses one of the most charming sights possible to conceive. As the vessel glides into the still waters of the port, Algiers, the Algiers of many a thrilling and romantic story, lies before him, vague, shadowy, and mysterious, with the curtain of night yet undrawn from her sleeping face. The vagueness and the mystery have a symbolism in them, to the mind of the European who thus takes his first glimpse of African soil—who has thus his first impression of the strange world that lies so near his shores, and yet whose life is so apart from his, so shrouded, so undeveloped. He looks about him in the luminous darkness,

luminous as all Algerian nights are, with tender shades of blue on sea and sky, and his first impression is that he has chanced upon some gala night. Points of light flicker here and there among the shipping, and flit over the face of the smooth water; long lines of radiance twist and curve about the shore, and bright spots glowing one above the other, throw into relief quaint indistinguishable masses of white buildings that mount into the sky.

As he strains his eyes into the darkness, suddenly the gleam of the illumination seems to take a yellow hue—to lose its brilliancy; a faint tinge of blue passes over the mass of shadowy white, and, turning his head quickly eastward, he perceives that night is ending—that a new day is born. It grows and gathers strength, the blue in the eastern sky turning to pale gold, then shifting to softest tints of rose-colour that intensify and deepen every instant, until the whole horizon glows with trembling light and colour, bathed in the refulgent beauty of an African sunrise, while the sun, himself scarcely distinguishable in the glory of his surroundings, rises with slow majesty behind the seaward spur of the Djurdjura Mountains.

It is a scene not soon to be forgotten, nor will "custom stale its infinite variety." It will stamp itself upon the gazer's mind as a remembrance to be cherished in darker hours, and under greyer skies—to be recalled again and again, to live with him as a promise and hope of the future —"a joy for ever!"

Then is the moment, when the rose-glow lights her white-washed walls with a magic beauty, for the traveller to take his first real look at Algiers—the warlike, the white—as she rises blushing from the sea.

"One wants a pencil dipped in colour to give any adequate conception of it.

"Imagine terrace after terrace of pure white marble piled upon a sunny height, with a broad blue bay below; bright green hills stretching towards a vast velvety plain on either side; beyond all a line of snow-tipped mountains, dim and distant as clouds, and you have some shadowy idea of as fair a picture as the world can show."—*A Winter with the Swallows.*

"And when the sun rises full upon her, painting her with those vermilion tints which every morning reach her straight from Mecca, one might fancy her to have risen during the night, from an enormous block of pure white marble veined with rose-colour."—*Une Année dans le Sahel. Fromentin.*

This is the first sight of Algiers, as described by one who saw her from the deck of a pirate ship in which he had been captured:—

"Algiers, forming an extensive semicircle of hills rising in amphitheatric beauty round the city, and many of them studded with country houses, is exceedingly picturesque as seen from the sea, while the numerous vineyards, orange and olive groves which surround the town, showing great marks of industry and cultivation, do not bear much analogy to the fierce character and vagrant lives of these African tyrants."—*Pananti's Narration of a Residence in Algiers*, 1814.

"This place, Algiers the warlike, which for several centuries has braved the greatest powers of Christendom, is not more than a mile and a half in circumference. It is situated up the declivity of a hill that rises north and north-east, whereby the houses rise so gradually above each other, that there is scarce one but what in one or other of these directions, has a full prospect of the sea."—*Dr. Shaw's Travels*, 1720—30.

"The town has the appearance of a theatre, the houses rising in tiers one slightly raised above the other. Its form is quadrilateral, the buildings closely pressed together without gardens."—*Voyages de M. de Breve*, 1605.

"Algiers looks from the sea like the sail of a great ship," says one old traveller (Peyssonnel, 1725). Another, Desfontaines, writes in 1789—

"This city, with its whitewashed houses rising in amphitheatric

order one above another, is extremely beautiful as you approach it by water. The charm, however, dissolves most effectually on entering the town, where there is nothing to excite admiration."

It is to be hoped that the modern traveller may not find his first impressions thus rudely dispelled, although it is hard to be forced to descend from the glory of southern sunrises, and the romance of rose-tinted Moorish palaces, to the excessively matter-of-fact business of landing luggage, and scrambling for rooms at hotels. But such are the necessities of our every-day unromantic life, which thrusts itself perpetually upon us, even in the midst of our sublimest visions.

No sooner does daylight appear, than the steamer is crowded round with a flotilla of small boats, manned by a motley crew of Arabs, Kabyles, Spaniards, and Maltese, waiting to convey the traveller from the vessel to the quay, whilst they struggle for places, and wrangle and vociferate in an undistinguishable jargon which is half Arabic and half *Lingua franca*, itself a hybrid patois grown from all the languages of modern Europe, but which more nearly resembles Italian than anything else.

The scene is, at least, an animated one, and the stalwart forms, dark faces, and picturesque dresses of the Arabs and Kabyles, add not a little to the general effect; but the traveller will possibly not be sorry, when he finds himself and his smaller impedimenta safely landed on the quay.

"It is not easy to meet with a more noisy, extortionate, and covetous set than these Europeanised Arabs, who are the first specimens the newly arrived traveller sees before he puts his foot on shore. Our steamer had scarcely dropped anchor when we were surrounded by boats filled with them. An indescribable scene of confusion followed. Vociferating in guttural Arabic and African French, a host of strange-

looking Kabyles scrambled up the ladder. Pushed back by the gendarmes and pulled down by other invaders who were trying to ascend, only a few gained the deck. One of these, a long, lanky fellow, with baggy trousers, *à la Turc*, about his loins, and his gandoura a kind of nominal shirt, looking in this scanty plumage, with his shaven head, not unlike a native ostrich, seized our bags *viva forza*. We thought the Berber would have carried us off with our baggage, when a stout Nubian interposed his claim to the prey. All were quarrelling and fighting about us, whilst the row in the boats presented another phase of Arab life at home."—*Algeria as It Is.*

It is only fair to say that this rather presents a picture of the landing as it was some few years since in Algeria, than as it is at the present day, the debarkation being now somewhat better arranged and more orderly. But the only way to avoid extortion and abuse from both boatmen and porters is to be well up in the "tarif." The authorised charge for landing is 30 c. each person, and 20 c. each package.

With the larger luggage the passenger has not to concern himself, as that will be conveyed by the authorities to the Custom-house on the quay, where he will have to claim it on payment of a small due.

On the quay, carriages (1 fr.) and guides in plenty will be found waiting to bring him to the hotels, which are all very near to the quay, but the walk to them is a hot and fatiguing one, either by the incline or up the long flights of steps.

The charge for porterage is—to the lower town, in which all the hotels are situated, under 50 lbs. 25 c., over 50 lbs. 75 c.; to the higher town—under 50 lbs. 30 c., over 50 lbs. 1 fr.

HOTELS.—There is a great want of a really first-class hotel in Algiers, such as may be met with in other winter

stations frequented by the English. It is a want which will doubtless, in time, be supplied, since the foundations of a fine new hotel are already laid on a splendid site opposite the sea. At present there is much difficulty in obtaining accommodation, and the existing hotels are scarcely up to the average of a provincial French inn. The prices of the rooms are high, the cuisine indifferent; and, while the lower floors are by no means the pleasantest, or the most healthy, there are no lifts—a terrible disadvantage for asthmatical and other invalids.

The *Hôtel d'Orient*, on the Boulevard de la République, is finely situated, with a splendid view of the bay and the Djurdjura Mountains from the front rooms, but the back and side rooms are dull. Rooms from 4 to 30 fr.; dinner 5 fr.; breakfast 3 fr.; attendance 1 fr. This hotel has the first reputation in Algiers, and it will be necessary to write some time beforehand in order to secure good apartments.

There are a fine marble entrance-hall, which serves as an agreeable lounge, a large public salon facing the sea, and various private sitting-rooms; a reading and smoking-room with no English papers in it except *Galignani*.

Arrangements can be made *en pension* from 12 fr. a day by the month. The cuisine is very poor, and the attendance indifferent.

Hôtel de la Régence, Place du Gouvernement; situation not so good, except that it faces south, and so has the full benefit of the sun. View of the sea only from the upper windows, as the clump of bamboos that stands before the hotel, completely shades the lower stories. Price of rooms rather lower than at the Orient. Dinner (the best in Algiers) 4 fr.; breakfast 3 fr. Arrangements are made *en pension*

by the month. The landlord is extremely attentive and civil.

Hôtel d'Europe, Place Bresson, with a fine view of the sea from the front windows. The entrance is poor, but the arrangements of the hotel are comfortable, and the landlord is most attentive and obliging. The salle à manger faces the sea. The salon is at the side. Dinner 4 fr.; breakfast 3 fr. Arrangements made by the month.

These are the hotels chiefly frequented by English people. There are various others in the town of less pretension, which are more particularly patronized by foreigners. Among these may be mentioned—

The *Hôtel de Paris*, in the Rue Bab-el-Oued, which was, until the construction of the "Boulevard," the principal hotel of the town.

Hôtel de Genève, Rue de la Marine, with a sea view from some of the rooms.

Hôtel de l'Oasis—all fairly good second-class houses—besides numerous smaller inns.

In the country, at Mustapha Supérieur, there is an hotel or pension, kept by Mr. Zammit (Hôtel de la Villa Orientale), in the house formerly occupied by the late British Vice-Consul, Mr. Elmore. The grounds are beautiful, and the table excellent. There are no private sitting-rooms; and, as the house is built somewhat in Moorish style, the windows are small and the rooms have little sun in them. It is a residence better suited to the spring than to the winter months. Terms from £4 to £5 a week.

There is also a *pension* kept by Mr. Thomas higher up the hill. Terms £4 a week.

Good *furnished apartments* are every year increasing in

number as the demand for them becomes greater. Those opposite the sea fetch high prices. The suites of rooms are all let here, as is universal on the Continent, with a kitchen, and attendance is not given. Dinner can be sent in from a restaurant, of which there are several.

Restaurant de la Bourse, on the Boulevard de la République, is particularly good. Breakfast 3 fr.; dinner 4 fr., or à la carte. French cuisine.

Restaurant of Hôtel du Midi, behind the Régence. Very good and extremely moderate. Italian cuisine.

The *cafés* of Algiers are frequented only by men, and are filled through the day and evening, by drinkers and smokers of all classes, whose chairs obstruct the pavement under the colonnades.

The principal are the Cafés de Bordeaux, d'Apollon, and de la Bourse, on the Place du Gouvernement; d'Orient and de Paris, on the Boulevard; d'Europe, on the Place Bresson.

The elegantly appointed ice-cafés of France and Italy have, curiously enough, no counterpart in French Algiers, nor do ices seem to be eaten, at any rate during the winter months.

Furnished Villas in the suburbs of Algiers are in great request during the winter months, and may be had at almost any price, according to size, situation, &c., beginning, perhaps, from 150 fr. to 200 fr. a month, and mounting up to 1,000 fr. or 1,500 fr.

The most fashionable quarter is Mustapha Supérieur, where is the Governor's summer palace, and where the English Consul and most of the English residents have their houses. Here the rents are highest, but on the other sides of the city equally pretty villas may be hired at cheaper

rates. All these houses have gardens, in which hothouse flowers, rich and rare according to our English notions, grow like weeds, many of the villas being buried under masses of bougainvillier, a rich purple creeper. For information respecting houses, apartments, &c., application should be made to Mr. Zerbib at the English Library and House Agency, 21, Rue d'Isly, or to M. Dufont, House-agent, Rue de Hamma.

The wages of *servants* are from 40 fr. to 50 fr. a month, men and women alike. For a moderate-sized villa, one woman servant, a *bonne*, is thought quite sufficient; and she not only undertakes to cook—as few cooks cook in England—wait and do all the house-work required, but she also goes every morning by omnibus or train to the market, and caters for the family wants. It need scarcely be said that unless the English housekeeper has some notion of Algerian prices, she pays considerably more than she should do to her *bonne*.

Almost all articles of food are cheap and plentiful at Algiers, poultry and game especially so, and vegetables and fruit to be had almost for nothing. Nearly all the butter eaten in Algiers comes from Milan, and is not, as a rule, good. Tea is extremely dear. The best is to be had at the English chemist's in the Rue Bab-Azoun.

The market for vegetables and fruit is held every morning in the Place de Chartres, under the arcades, on one side of which are the best butchers' shops, and on the opposite side of the square the best grocers—Saliba and Folka. In these shops Huntley and Palmer's biscuits, Crosse and Blackwell's preserves and pickles, and a variety of small English delicacies, may be procured.

There is no lack of good shops at Algiers, where all

kinds of European goods may be bought at prices very little higher than in France. The best are in the Rue Bab-Azoun, which is a Regent Street in miniature.

Arab and Eastern manufactures are to be found in the bazaars or passages leading from the Place du Gouvernement, in the Rue de la Lyre, the Place Malakoff, &c. Here are soft-coloured carpets and curtains, haiks of finest silk and alpaca, native jewellery of all kinds, embroidered leather-work, Kabyle and Tunisian pottery, ostrich eggs mounted in filigree, feather fans and a variety of costly curiosities. All these shops, or rather stalls, are kept by Moors or Jews, and it must be understood by travellers that a great deal of bargaining is expected by them, before a purchase is arranged, and that the dealers invariably ask a higher price than they intend to take—the Jews more particularly—while they at the same time seem generally willing to part with their goods at smaller profits, rather than lose a customer, or allow his money to pass into the hands of their neighbours, the Moors, towards whom they entertain no very neighbourly feeling.

The traveller who makes a few purchases amongst these people, is soon received with a friendly welcome by the various merchants as he passes down the bazaar; he is invited to walk in here, offered coffee there, and generally made much of, without being importuned to buy; and the Moors especially, with the grand courtesy which is habitual to them, will take an extraordinary amount of trouble to gratify the curiosity of the stranger.

A depôt of Eastern goods kept by a Frenchman, Dorez, is well worth visiting. It amounts to an exhibition of all that is rarest and most beautiful in native work. His

establishment is in the Rue Bruce, at the corner of Rue Socgemah. That of Madame Luce, in an old Moorish house, in the Rue de Toulon, where the most elaborate embroideries are worked by Arab girls, should on no account be omitted. Ladies only are admitted to see the children at their work; but gentlemen are not excluded from the purchasing-room. The prices will not be found excessive.

This establishment has Government support. It is an effort on the part of the French to elevate the Arab woman, by making her independent. An attempt was also made by Madame Luce to add some small amount of mental to the manual instruction given; but it had to be abandoned, Arab prejudices being too strong to permit of its continuance. Arab parents are with difficulty persuaded to allow their daughters to learn a handicraft; but nothing will induce them to allow their children's prospects to be spoiled by being taught such unholy arts as reading and writing.

Learned maidens, it seems, are by no means at a premium among Moorish suitors.

Banks.—Bank of Algeria, Boulevard de la République; Société Générale de l'Algérie, Rue Bab-Azoun; English and American banker, J. Monk Jackson, Boulevard de la République (on the incline leading from the Boulevard to the Quay). Mr. Jackson, with a liberality for which all English and American visitors to Algiers are grateful, has attached to his offices a reading-room, which is open all day long to any who choose to make use of it, and is well supplied with English and American newspapers. Here is also a register of English visitors. Banking hours are from eight to eleven, and from three to five.

There is no English club in Algiers.

"The best French club is the Cercle d'Alger, Rue de Palmyre. Strangers admitted on presentation by members. French billiard tables, reading and writing room, and good cuisine."—*Murray's Guide.*

Consuls.—English Consul-General, Lieutenant-Colonel P. L. Playfair. Office, Maison Limousin, Place Bresson; private residence at Mustapha Supérieur, near the Colonne Voirol. American Consul, Colonel Burgher, 4, Rue d'Isly.

English Church at the Porte d'Isly.

English Library, 21, Rue d'Isly. Winter visitors are expected to contribute 10 fr. each towards its support. Presents of books gladly accepted.

English Doctor, Dr. Thompson, Rue Rovigo; fee 12 fr. 50 c.; most kind and attentive.

General Post-office, Boulevard de la République. Letters and newspapers from Europe arrive three times a week, and the post, or *courrier*, as it is called, leaves four times a week for Marseilles. Postage at the same rate as in France.

Telegraph Office in the same building.

There are several *Newspapers* published in Algiers:—*Le Moniteur de l'Algérie*, *L'Akhbar*, *La Vigie Algérienne*, *Le Mobacher*, with French and Arabic text, &c. Most of these, with one or two French newspapers, are taken in at the hotels.

The *Bibliothèque*, in the Rue de l'État-Major, is open daily to readers, who will gladly acknowledge the kindness and courtesy of the Curator, Monsieur MacCarthy—the well-known Algerian scholar.

The *Theatre* is in the Place Bresson, where, during the winter season, operas are performed three times in the week, as well as on Sundays. The interior is tastefully decorated, the seats comfortable, and the performances far

from despicable. Evening dress not necessary. Places can be secured at noon on the day of the performance. Private boxes, 20 and 16 fr.; orchestra and balcony stalls 4 fr. Ladies do not go into the orchestra stalls.

Baths.—The best European baths are at 44, Rue Bab-el-Oued; the best Moorish at 2, Rue de l'État-Major, which are reserved for women from noon until 5 P.M.

The operations of a Turkish bath are sufficiently well known, and scarcely need describing. The bath is the rendezvous of all the Moorish ladies, who constantly spend whole days in these watery delights, while the night is employed in the same manner by the men.

The treatment, according to a French writer (Nodier), who minutely describes the process, seems to be a little rough, if one may judge by the following passage:—

"The temperature of this room is so high, that after having been subjected but a few minutes to its enervating influence, one is glad to lie down, so incapable do the limbs feel of supporting the weight of the body. Then begins the long operation of pounding and rubbing, to the monotonous chant of verses from the Koran. This is not all. The patient, seized by active and well-practised hands, hears every bone in his body cracking; he is twisted and turned, rolled into a ball and rolled out again, as if he were a clown, and while one of the swarthy negro attendants pinches every vertebra of his spine, others take advantage of his nervous movements to pull his arms and legs in different directions, and make all his bones crack at once. At this moment he may esteem himself happy if the kindly caution of a friend have taught him the Arab word which signifies 'enough' (*barca*), and which speedily puts an end to these somewhat laborious gymnastics."

Negroes attend the bath for the men, and negresses for the women.

There are sea baths on the shore, which are much patronized in spring and summer.

CONVEYANCES.—There is a tramway, which will be found very convenient by travellers. The place of starting is the Place du Gouvernement, and the cars run in two opposite directions, to St. Eugène, and to Mustapha Inférieur, &c. The carriages are extremely clean and comfortable.

There are many omnibuses, or *coricolos*, as they are called here; but they are almost exclusively used by the Arabs, and cannot, on any account, be recommended to Europeans.

The only omnibus which is not patronized by the natives is that (a green one) which starts every hour from the corner of the Place du Gouvernement and Rue Cléopâtre, for Mustapha Supérieur, the English quarter. This is generally filled with English residents and visitors.

The omnibuses or diligences which run to more distant places are slightly superior to the town conveyances, but will not be found possible for ladies.

To Bou-Zarea	10	A.M.	4	P.M.	Returning	7	A.M.	1	P.M.
Birkhadem	10	A.M.	4	P.M.	,,	7	A.M.	1	P.M.
Guyotville	5	A.M.	2.30	P.M.	,,	7.30	A.M.	5.30	P.M.
Staouëli	3.30	P.M.			,,	6	A.M.		
Chéragas	10	A.M.	3.30	P.M.	,,	7	A.M.	1.30	P.M.

Carriages or Voitures de Place of all kinds :—

The day of 12 hours	20 fr.
The half-day of 6 hours	11 fr.
By the hour	2 fr.

A drive of three hours or so is usually considered a half day.

There is a tariff of fares to the different points; but it must be admitted it is seldom accepted without dispute. Any imposition, however, should be immediately referred to the Préfet, who has gained much credit by the regulations

which he has introduced with regard to conveyances, and the strictness with which he has enforced them. "Drive me to the Préfecture," will usually put an end to extortionate demands.

By the course :—

	fr.	c.
In the Lower town	1	0
In the Upper	2	0
Outside the town :—		
To Agha Railway Station To the Hospital of the Dey Cité Bugeaud	1	25
Mustapha Inférieur (hospital) Fontainebleue St. Eugène Road to 4th kilom.	2	0
Jardin d'Essai Summer Palace of the Governor	2	50
Colonne Voirol. Ruisseau Hussein-Dey (Bridge)	3	0
Pointe Pescade. Frais-Vallon	3	50
El-Biar (church)	4	0
Notre-Dame d'Afrique	5	0
Bou-Zarea	6	0

These fares include the return journey, but if the traveller alights, half a franc must be paid for every quarter of an hour the carriage is kept waiting.

After 11 p.m. the fares are increased by one-half.

Good private carriages can be hired at the livery stables from 20 fr. to 25 fr. a day, including driver. Saddle horses at 5 fr. a ride, or 150 fr. a month. Carriages by the month cost about 400 fr to 500 fr., including coachman, or with a single horse 300 fr.

Livery Stable Keepers.—J. Ducotterd, opposite the Hôtel des Postes, Rue de la Liberté. Charles Mame, a British subject, just behind the English Consulate. La Gier, behind the Telegraph Office, and others.

CHAPTER IV.

THE NATIVE INHABITANTS OF ALGIERS.

"His tribe were God Almighty's gentlemen."
Dryden.

"Sufferance is the badge of all our tribes."
Merchant of Venice.

THAT which to an European untravelled in Eastern lands makes the chief novelty, and constitutes no small portion of the charm of Algiers, is the extraordinary variety of costume which meets him at every turn; the blaze of colour, the mingling of the grandly simple with the picturesque and grotesque—Eastern life and European civilization walking side by side.

He is at first somewhat bewildered by the new persons rather than the new things about him. He feels suddenly transported into a masquerade, and can scarcely persuade himself of his surroundings that they are "all real." He finds himself, at every moment, transgressing the rules of good manners, by staring his hardest at each strangely-clad figure he encounters.

As Arab, Moor, or Jew, each in his curious Eastern dress, passes by him, he is sent back in imagination a score or two of years to the days of his childhood, when he pored in delight over the pictured pages of the Thousand

and One Nights, or even earlier still, to the dimly-remembered days of his babyhood, to the roughly-coloured but well-beloved daubs which adorned the nursery-walls, and presented to his infant mind, as intimate acquaintances, Abraham and Isaac, Jacob and Esau, Joseph and his brethren. The remembrance of them, as thus portrayed, has, in the lapse of years, almost faded from his mind; but now, suddenly, in the streets of Algiers, they meet him face to face, jostle him or brush by him, with their grandly-sweeping garments and impassive faces, while he stands doubting, with a strange uncertainty, whether that which he sees before his eyes is real, or whether he will not presently wake up to find that he has been dreaming.

There are about ten thousand native Mahomedans in the city of Algiers, out of a population of forty-nine thousand souls. These are chiefly Arabs, and, as we somewhat arbitrarily call them, Moors. There are also a considerable number of negroes, and, added to all these, a large native Jewish population, each of whom wears his distinctive garb; and on first arriving the stranger finds himself somewhat puzzled to distinguish between the various races.

The ARABS, those majestic figures who, with their white burnous wrapped about them, first attract the traveller's attention, and most forcibly remind him of the Biblical patriarchs, are the descendants of that Arab horde, which in the seventh century swept over and conquered the north of Africa, and at the same time established there the religion of Mahomet, while the native population, with the European colonists, were either destroyed or driven into the mountains. Of these mountaineers we shall have to speak further. The Arabs are for the most part agricul-

turists on a very small scale, or shepherds; and the greater portion of them still carry a long thick shepherd's staff as part of their ordinary dress.

They are all bare-legged, and some of them bare-footed, though a residence in towns and the necessity of treading

Arab.

on burning pavements have induced many to adopt the use of shoes. The head is invariably covered by the hood of the burnous, and is besides bound round and round with thick hempen cord; and the burnous itself, made of a heavy white woollen material, seems to serve not only as

a garment to keep out equally heat and cold, but also, like the Scotch shepherd's plaid, as house and home.

At all hours of the day and night, curious white bundles may be seen lying like dropped sacks by the wayside, and the passer-by, curious to inquire, will discover that they are Arabs rolled up in their burnous, and fast asleep, or at any rate bent on the enjoyment of that *dolce-far-niente*, which is as dear to the Arab mind, as to that of his neighbours on the opposite side of the Mediterranean.

They are a remarkably fine race of men, with handsome intelligent faces, brown complexions, expressive melancholy-looking eyes, aquiline noses, good teeth, and black beards; but that which most particularly distinguishes them, is the wonderful ease and dignity of their carriage.

They have the spring of the desert in their elastic step, and wear their ragged robes as though they were regal mantles.

"In the transparent atmosphere, the dark skins and bright-coloured clothes of these stalwart fellows seemed actually to shine with a lustre, whilst the wonderful power, majesty, and grace of their wholly unfettered limbs was quite a revelation."—*A Winter with the Swallows.*

Owing probably to this same freedom, a deformed or ill-shapen Arab is scarcely to be met with, even among the lowest or begging class, but blindness is very prevalent.

In spite, however, of their fine proportions and lithe limbs, the Arabs are said to be constitutionally a weak race. They live very poorly, chiefly on kous-kous, a preparation of semolina; and though able to support a wonderful amount of fatigue on so little, they easily succumb to disease. Their first illness is said to be their last, while the race is

gradually but surely dying out, as it seems to be the fate of all primitive races to do, before the onward march of the civilizer. During the famine of 1867, in spite of all the efforts made by the French, more than two hundred thousand persons are said to have perished.

The French give the Arabs a very bad name for ferocity, dishonesty, and treachery; but it is possible that the immense gulf which lies between the two races, their opposite character, manners, and traditions, as well as the hatred naturally engendered between conqueror and conquered, make them scarcely fair or unprejudiced judges. As individuals they will be found kindly and courteous, and very well disposed towards the English, whom they distinguish instantly from the French, and regard with much more favour—cherishing, so it is stated, an idea that one day the British rule will supplant the French in Algiers, affording its people the same privileges which their co-religionists in India enjoy.

However this may be, English visitors are invariably treated with deference by the Arabs; and ladies may ramble without fear through the most unlikely-looking quarters of the city, or in the lonely country lanes.

Courage, generosity, and hospitality have always been recognised as virtues among the Arabs; they pay great respect to old age, and under French rule, seem learning honesty.

"Professional thieves of the European stamp, such as the pick-pocket fraternity, do not exist among the Arabs.

"Speaking of respect for the law, or fear of chastisement, we may remark that cases of assault and robbery, such as make the environs of some European capitals unsafe after dark, are seldom heard of in the neighbourhood of Algiers. Whether this be owing to the inoffensive disposition of the natives, or whether it is to be attributed to the

excellence of the police—partly Arab and partly French—is not of so much importance as the fact itself."—*Algeria as It Is.*

The lower classes of Arabs are excessively dirty, and their near neighbourhood is to be avoided, especially as their religious prejudices forbid them from taking away life, even that of an insect. The result may be better imagined than described!

The higher orders of Arabs and Moors are, on the contrary, scrupulously cleanly in their persons and dress, spending a large part of their life at the bath, while their clothes, especially those of the women, are of dazzling whiteness and purity.

The people whom we term MOORS, called "Hadars," or dwellers in houses, by the Arabs, are a mixed race, the descendants of Arabs, Turks, and Europeans. They were the pirates at whose name Europe, two centuries ago, trembled. At the present day they form the mercantile or shopkeeping class of Algiers, the wealthiest among the natives. They are to be found sitting cross-legged, with a melancholy and supercilious air, in their tiny shops, surrounded by their gay wares, themselves in their picturesque costume, the most attractive feature of the whole. But they also, many of them, possess pretty country-houses, where they keep their harems, or where at least their wives and daughters live in elegant and sad seclusion.

The dress of the Moor is very handsome, with richly-embroidered vest, wide silk sash, and bag-trousers. On his head he wears a fez surrounded by a white turban. He drapes a cloak gracefully over one shoulder, and altogether presents a stately and striking figure, but without the ease and gracefulness of the unfettered Arab. Nor are his

features so well defined or characteristic as those of the purer race; but the Moors are usually handsome, with pale oval faces and dark melancholy eyes. On the whole they have a somewhat effeminate look.

Moorish Woman.

The Arab and Moorish women are alike veiled, a striped white shawl, called a *haik*, of coarser or finer material according to the position of the wearer, being thrown over the head, and concealing the whole person down to the feet, the face being hidden by a white linen handkerchief,

called an *adjar*, tied tightly across the nose, under the eyes.

The general effect is decidedly clumsy and ungraceful, especially with those Moorish women whose toilette beneath the haik is elaborate. In the street they present the appearance of animated clothes-bags, and walk with a curious shuffling gait, very far removed from the unfettered dignity of their lords and masters. Their lives, poor things! are altogether in accord with their costume. They are not "emancipated;" and though in the houses of the richer Moors the slavery of their women may be gilded, it is but slavery after all. The Mahomedan invariably buys his wife—that is to say, he pays a price for her to her family, large or small according to her reputed beauty, or accomplishments as a housewife; and though when a girl is born to him an Arab laments, a man with many daughters, if he knows how to dispose of them well, in time becomes rich.

It is curious to observe how this custom of wife-buying is found among all semi-barbarous peoples. It has been laid on modern civilization to develop the notion of a dowry—a notion which is certainly carried to its very fullest extent, by the nation which has made Algeria a French province. But the Arab, perhaps naturally, considers the wife for whom he has paid, very much in the same light as his horse or his ass—as very decidedly his chattel, to be driven and beaten, to fetch and carry, to work and toil, while the husband and master reclines at his ease, idly smoking his chibouck.

The French have done a good deal to improve the condition of the Arab woman, by exacting vengeance when any special act of ill-treatment comes to light. If you chance

to see an Arab prisoner marched through the streets by mounted soldiers, and are curious enough to inquire his offence, you will probably be told, "It is his wife he has been beating; they all do it, these Arabs." And then come the shrug and sneer, with which a Frenchman invariably speaks of a race with whom he has so little in common.

But the cases which thus come under public notice are naturally, only the most flagrant. A French writer on the subject says truly enough—

"When an Arab woman marries she is sure only that she will be a slave; but who can tell how many domestic tortures, which no eye can see, or into whose mysteries the law never ventures to penetrate, she will have to endure?"

Islamism, though it places woman in a decidedly inferior position to man, does not, any more than Christianity, countenance these cruelties; but unhappily it is not only among Mahomedans and half-savage Arabs, that wife-beating and wife-murder are known to exist as national crimes!

The secluded position and complete ignorance of the Arab woman, add to the difficulties which surround any attempt to ameliorate her condition, but it is a hopeful sign that women are found to avail themselves of the strong arm of the law against unusual oppression, in spite of the disrepute among their own people, which such a proceeding naturally entails.

A curious anecdote is told àpropos of this subject. An Arab chieftain had occasion to travel to Constantine on business, and bade an affectionate farewell to his family. In a few days he returned in a state of great excitement, and, calling his favourite wife from the tent, bade her fetch

him four posts and a cord. To the woman's horror he seized her, lashed her to the stakes, and began savagely beating her. Her cries attracted a crowd of villagers.

"What has she done?" asked one.

"She, the best of wives and mothers, the pearl of the tribe!" exclaimed another.

At length, the infuriated man stopped to explain, that at Constantine he had seen an Arab woman accuse her husband before the court of ill-usage; and the Cadi, backed by the French authorities, had actually given a judgment in her favour!

"All men are insulted through this woman!" exclaimed the chieftain; "and I am but relieving my mind, and assuring myself that I, at least, am master in my own family."

Happily these prejudices are to a certain extent giving way, and some of the more intelligent and less bigoted Arabs, who have observed how much better is the social position of the wife among Europeans, have made it a point that their daughters should be married according to French law, a course which not only secures to them a certain amount of legal protection, but also prevents them from having any legitimate rival in the affections of their husbands.

Arab women, unlike the men, are small, and not as a rule good-looking, except when very young. Their noses appear to become flattened by the constant use of the adjar, and their faces are very colourless from the same reason. It is a curious fact that this disguise was unknown among Arab women, until the time of Mahomet's marriage with his young and beautiful wife Ayesha, as to whose conduct, indeed, it became needful for the angel Gabriel to make a

special communication, before the Prophet's uneasiness could be removed. The jealousy of one man has been powerful enough to cover the faces of all Moslem wives and daughters for twelve hundred years, and etiquette's stern laws, adding their weight to religion's teaching, still forbid any decent Mahomedan woman to show any portion of her face, but her eyes.

"Young Arab and Moorish women, we may remark, cover the face because they are ordered to do so; the old find it a convenient policy, for like charity, the veil covers many defects."—*Algeria as It Is.*

Surely there is compensation in all human woes, and Mahomet was, after all, but a bungling tyrant, when he veiled flat noses and coarse mouths, only to display to still greater advantage, the one special charm and glory of Arab beauty! In some parts of Algeria, where it is to be supposed jealousy reigns rampant, the women, even the poorest, are only allowed to show *one* eye, and have to make their way through the world—often encumbered with heavy burdens—as best they may, crab-fashion.

But in Algiers itself, custom is not so severe; the adjar is sometimes observed to be of the very thinnest material, so that the shape, at least, of the features can be discerned beneath it; and the eyes are permitted to do their work of fascination without obstruction.

The effect of the soft black eyes which look out above the adjar, is rather spoiled by the practice of tattooing the forehead, and also that of extending the eyebrows, so as to meet in one line; but the eyes themselves are almost always large and beautiful, and have, for the most part, the tender wistful look of some dumb animal in them.

All the Arab women colour their nails and the palms of their hands with henna; some of them dye the roots of their hair to the same red tint.

Their indoor costume varies according to the circumstances of the wearer, from the simple shirt, or *habaya*, of the working woman, to the elaborately embroidered vest, rich sash, and silken trousers of the fashionable belle. But all, from highest to lowest, are resplendent with jewellery.

Earrings, anklets, and bracelets of gold, necklaces roughly set in Eastern fashion with various precious stones, set off the charms of the wealthy Moorish woman; silver, coral, or glass takes the place of gold in the adornment of her poorer sisters, while even the little Arab beggar-girl of the streets, with scarcely a rag to cover her, has her shapely brown arms encircled, above elbow and wrist, with bands of copper.

As a Moorish woman walks along, the rings, or bangles, she wears on arms and ankles, make a faint jingling music "wherever she goes," and one is instantly reminded of that "tinkling with the feet" which Isaiah so severely reproved in the Jewish ladies. In the Koran, besides, there is an express direction as to the jewels of women—that they are not to display them, except to women or to their near relations; also "they are not to make a noise with their feet, that their hidden ornaments may be discovered."

A Mahomedan woman's jewellery is her personal property, and remains hers in case of divorce or abandonment.

Moorish women of the better class are very rarely seen abroad. During the year following their marriage they are not permitted to cross the threshold of their houses, and afterwards but seldom; the baths and the cemeteries, which

they visit on Fridays, being the only places of amusement open to them.

The KABYLES, the mountaineers to whom we have referred, were the inhabitants of the country before the Arab invasion; indeed, their occupation dates back to such a very remote period, that we may be almost permitted to call them the original inhabitants. They are supposed to be of Phœnician origin, but have a considerable admixture of Greek and Roman, and even Teutonic blood in them, as is evident by the fair skins and blue eyes constantly found among them, and which do not belong to African or Asiatic races. They are also known as Berbers—men of Barbary, or, as the Romans called them, Barbarians.

At the time of the Arab invasion they were a Christian people, and, owing to the Roman colony in their midst, considerably advanced in civilization. Driven by the Arabs from the plains, they established themselves in the mountains, where, until within the last twenty years, they maintained inviolable their independence. But though they resisted the sword of the Arab invader, they in time adopted his religion, retaining only as relics of their former faith, the habit of keeping their Sabbath on the Christian Sunday, instead of on the Mahomedan Friday, and of having as a rule but one wife.

The Kabyle woman altogether occupies a very much better position than the Arab woman. She is not veiled, and is treated, it is said, as a companion and equal by her husband, in whose occupations she assists. Kabyle women are not often to be met with in Algiers itself, and the men who journey thither to dispose of their goods or to make purchases, are scarcely to be distinguished from Arabs,

unless it may be by the fairness of their skins and the dirtiness of their burnous. They are all very poor, but industrious and ingenious.

The attractive wares in the Moorish shops are to a great extent of Kabyle manufacture.

The inhabitants of Algiers seem to be of all varieties and shades of colour which the human face is capable of wearing. In addition to the pale-faced Moors and brown-skinned Arabs, there is a very large population verging on, if not reaching, the NEGRO type, with a certain proportion of the "pure" African. Negresses seem to be in greater numbers at Algiers than negroes, or possibly their avocations as bread and cake sellers in the streets, cause them to be more prominent than the negroes, who for the most part are employed in basket-making, and other industries in the houses of their quarter.

The negresses are painfully ugly, with protruding lips and flat noses. They wear a blue and white haik, checked like dusters. The elder ones, at least, do not veil the face. They are to be met with principally at the Arab markets in the Place de la Lyre and the Place d'Isly. They are also employed at the Moorish baths, and wherever hard work is required.

The negroes are an extremely industrious, gay, and contented race. Before the French conquest they were all in a state of slavery, and they are, therefore, unlike the Arabs, well satisfied with a government which has brought them such a welcome change of fortune. A more numerous, and generally picturesque race, are the MOZABITES, who, with the shining black skin of the negro, can boast of well-shaped noses and Egyptian-looking mouths. They are finely made, have large and expressive eyes, and, indeed,

are many of them, both men and women, really handsome, although the description given by D'Aranda in 1642, would scarcely suggest the idea of beauty. He says—

"The Mozabi are thought of little account, as they love the kitchen better than the camp. They are very deformed in their countenance, for they are neither black nor white, but look as if their faces were perpetually oyled."

They come from a country called Mozab, south of El-Aghouat, and actually in the Great Sahara. They are supposed to be identical with the Moabites of Scripture, and to have migrated from Syria in the time of the Prophet. The district which they properly inhabit is a frightfully hot one, consisting of seven cities all built on oases in the desert, which by the untiring energy and industry of these people are maintained in the highest state of cultivation. Not only do palms and vines flourish here, but by means of immense labour and an admirable system of water storage and irrigation, even corn and vegetables are raised, and tobacco and cotton cultivated. In Algiers the Mozabites monopolize the trade of butchers, to which the Arabs have an objection. Their shining black faces and bright eyes may also be seen, as a rule, in a framework of greenery, in the small vegetable and fruit shops of the Arab town.

Their dress is very peculiar, consisting of a loose, sleeveless shirt of woollen material, striped red and blue, and reminding one irresistibly of that "coat of many colours" which caused so much envy in the breasts of Joseph's brethren. On their heads they carry white turbans. The women for the most part wear the haik of the blue checked duster-pattern which is worn by the negresses; but some of them are in white like the Arabs, and are veiled.

Even under the government of the Deys the industry and excellent qualities of the Mozabites were recognised. They were encouraged to settle in Algiers by a kind of charter being granted them, which gave them the monopoly, not only of the butcheries, but of the flour-mills and public baths.

Another race who were favoured by the Turkish rulers in much the same fashion were the BISKRIS.

We are informed by an old traveller—

"They (the Biskris or Biskarras) are employed here in all the lowest occupations, as street and chimney cleaners, and as carriers of water. They have an Emir or chief who is responsible for their conduct, and pays a tribute to the Dey, which he afterwards divides among all those of the nation who are in Algiers. Every evening these people are distributed through the streets, where they lie down at the doors of the houses and shops, to protect them from robbery. They are answerable for all thefts committed, so that if a house or shop is broken into, they pay the damage, and are severely punished.

"These cases are not frequent, but when they occur, he who has been robbed makes his complaint and states his loss. The Dey then sends for the Emir of the Biskarras, who, in his turn, orders the negligent guard to appear before him. The end of the investigation usually is, that the Biskarras on whom the fault lies, are sent to be hanged at Bab-Azoun, and the whole nation is condemned to pay the value of the lost property, the fine being divided equally among them."—*Relation d'un voyage sur les côtes de Barbarie en* 1725, *par J. A. Peyssonnel.*

The duties of the Biskris as police have fallen into other hands; but they are still the scavengers of the city. Early in the morning long files of them may be seen traversing the streets, each with an unhappy and long-suffering donkey, across whose back are slung panniers of palmetto; these are for the reception of the refuse which is collected from before every door. By this somewhat primitive means

the streets are kept well cleaned, while the gutters are continually running with pure water.

The Biskris are also the porters and water-carriers of the city. There are very few houses into which water is artificially carried. In the Moorish houses the rain-water was anciently

Water-carrier.

stored in cisterns beneath the courts, in case of siege, we are told by an old traveller, "for there are no wells in the city, and the water has to be brought from long distances by means of aqueducts, which could easily be cut down by an enemy" (M. Peyssonnel, 1725). The aqueducts

still supply Algiers, the water being conveyed by them to numerous fountains in various parts of the city. It is about these fountains, that picturesquely Eastern groups of men and women are always assembled, chatting and filling their great copper jugs—the classical amphora—for the service of the various houses.

Rachel the soft-eyed may sometimes be seen there; oftener Morgiana the dusky, carrying her pitcher with a regal grace; but the Biskris is never-failing—it is his profession.

The lives of these people are said to be this. The Biskris comes, if not from Biskra, as his name implies, from some inland province of Algeria—less favoured of nature and less frequented by the rich foreigner. He finds his way from his home in the desert to the great city on foot; he has no shoes to wear out, and the dates he carries with him, or the cactus-fruit he plucks as he goes along, support him through the weary journey.

If, when he arrives at Algiers, he have a couple of sous in his pocket, he hires an *emphore*, as the copper jugs are called. He is paid a sou for each load that he carries into a house. Upon this he makes money. Five or six sous a day suffice for all his wants. Lodging costs him nothing. He lies down to sleep anywhere and everywhere. He lives upon bread or kous-kous, two sous-worth of coffee daily, and a little fruit. In ten years he has accumulated perhaps as much as forty pounds. With this he returns to his desert-oasis, buys a plantation of date-palms, and a robust wife to water them and wait upon him. By-and-by he will probably afford himself two or three more of these luxuries; but wives, even in the Sahara, are expensive articles, a good

young one not being able to be procured under five or six pounds.

One, however, does for a beginning, and thus handsomely provided with land and substance, the retired Biskris settles down upon his property, to avenge himself for his ten years' hard work, by doing nothing but smoke his chibouck during the rest of his days.

Among the native population of Algiers are to be found about seven thousand JEWS, who by their quaint costumes and handsome faces add not a little to the general effect. Indeed, the Jew's dress, not differing very much from the wealthy Moor's, except that its colours are usually darker and richer, and that his legs are encased in well-fitting blue stockings, is about the handsomest to be met with in Algiers. The Jewess's costume is more remarkable for quaintness than beauty. It consists of a long, straight, silk dress of some bright colour, usually green, with the addition of a shawl for outdoor wear; the hair is entirely covered with a black silk handkerchief bound tightly over the brows, while the chin is encased in a white linen cloth, with which the jaws seem bound up. To complete the *coiffure*, a huge bow of gold and white embroidered gauze is fastened at the back of the head, and hangs down over the shoulders.

Under such a disguise it is scarcely possible for the Jewish beauty to assert itself, but the faces of the younger women are some of them extremely handsome, and as they walk the streets with the swinging gait peculiar to them, their rich complexions and bold black eyes, form a curious contrast to the shrouded faces and forms of their Moorish sisters.

No one can have greater reason to rejoice in the French occupation of Algiers than the Jews. Although they have been established in large numbers here for centuries, many of them having fled to North Africa from persecution in other countries, especially at the time of the expulsion of their race from Spain, they were still an oppressed and down-trodden people in the time of Turkish rule. They were made to suffer various personal indignities, compelled to dress always in black, "in long garments with a great cape of black serge without seam," we are told, "and their women were only permitted to veil a portion of their faces," which may possibly account for the disfiguring fashion of hiding the chin. They were not allowed to ride on horseback. When passing a mosque they were obliged to go barefooted; they dared not approach a fountain or well if a Moor were drinking there. It devolved upon them to execute all criminals, and to bury them. When they themselves suffered death they were burnt alive, and on every pretext they were robbed and fined. In spite of all which, the race continued to live in Algiers—to thrive and prosper. "It is true we suffer very much, but then what money we make!" said a Jew merchant to Pananti, who has written so interesting an account of his adventures as an Algerine captive.

Since the French conquest the Jews have of course been relieved of all their disabilities, and have indeed been treated with such honour, that the jealousy of the Arabs has been roused to no small extent.

No reverse of fortune has seemed to them so cruel, as that which has put power and trust in the hands of the despised Jews. Possibly, in exalting the Jewish over the

Moorish race, the French have not acted advisedly, and it is said that the revolt of 1871 was, in a measure, caused by the discontent of the Arabs at the enrolment of Jews in the French army, and the appointment of a Jewish judge. Be this as it may, the Jews of Algiers are now a flourishing community, absorbing to themselves the chief commerce of the town. Like their compatriots all over the world, they are sleek in manner and apt at driving bargains, but good citizens, peaceable, and industrious.

CHAPTER V.

HISTORICAL NOTICE OF ALGIERS.

"Algiers the warlike."

THE town of Algiers is built on the site of the ancient Icosium, a fact which was fully proved by certain inscriptions, found during the excavations necessary for the foundations of the new Boulevard; but, though created a *Latin* city by the Emperor Vespasian, it never played any important part in history, being overshadowed by the glory of its neighbours, Carthage—the modern Tunis, and Julia Cæsarea, the modern Cherchel.

It claims, however, a heroic origin, for Sallust, the historian, relates that when Hercules on his travels "passed by this spot, he was abandoned by twenty of his followers, who chose the place to build a city there."

The mythical conquest of Northern Africa by Hercules, is intimated by the fable that he took the globe from *Atlas* upon his own shoulders, overcame the dragons that guarded the orchards of the Hesperides, and made himself master of the golden fruit. Can this, one is led to wonder, have any reference to the golden orange-groves that lie at the foot of the Atlas Mountains?

This part of the world was known to the ancients as Libya or Mauritania, the home of the Mauri, and the original inhabitants of the country, "rude Libyans," as they are described by Sallust, are supposed to have been of Canaanitish origin. Indeed, we are assured by ancient writers—Procopius, and certain African historians cited by Leone—that there existed at one time two pillars of white stone, set up by the earliest settlers, with the following inscription in the Phœnician language and character upon them :—"We are the Canaanites that fled from Joshua, the son of Nun, that notorious robber."

In the year 860 B.C., Dido, sister of the King of Tyre, landed with her followers on the coast of Africa, and founded the famous city of Carthage.

> "Phœnician Dido rules the state,
> Who fled from Tyre to shun her brother's hate."

The Carthaginians at first were contented to pay a tribute to the Libyans, but soon freeing themselves from this degradation, they subdued the neighbouring tribes, and gradually increasing in power and wealth, extended their dominions over the whole northern coast of Africa from Cyrene to the Atlantic, conquered the Balearic Islands and Sardinia, and made settlements in Sicily.

Their possessions in Sicily first brought them into collision with the Romans, and led to those struggles which take up so large a portion of Roman history, and which are known as the Punic wars.

The Carthaginians under Hamilcar crossed over to Spain, established an empire there, and founded the city of New Carthage—Carthagena.

The famous Hannibal, son of Hamilcar, not only conquered the whole of Spain, but, crossing the Pyrenees with an army of sixty thousand men and thirty-seven elephants, he led his victorious troops up the valley of the Rhone to the Lake of Geneva, and successfully accomplished a passage of the Alps, though under incredible difficulties and suffering extraordinary hardships, by which one-half of his army was sacrificed. He shortly afterwards gained the battle of Cannæ—the greatest defeat ever sustained by the Roman arms—and wasting the country as he went, carried terror to the very gates of Rome.

The disgraces and disasters suffered by the Romans in this second Punic war, were not fully avenged until the close of the third, sixty years later, when, in the year 145 B.C., Carthage, after a desperate resistance, was taken and utterly destroyed by her implacable rival and foe. The city suffered pillage and fire, its magnificent buildings were razed to the ground, and their very foundations ploughed over.

Once masters of the land, the Romans organized a system of government which, while leaving a great part of the country nominally in the hands of the native inhabitants, secured to them the real power.

The mountain tribes—Libyans, Barbarians, Berbers, or Kabyles as we call them—had never owned allegiance to the Carthaginians, but during the long struggle between them and the Romans had taken the part, sometimes of one, sometimes of the other. After the fall of Carthage, several of their chieftains reigned over a portion of Mauritania and the neighbouring Numidia, with the title of king, but under the protection of the Roman state.

The most celebrated of these was Jugurtha, a brave and ambitious prince, who took up arms against the Romans, and after having for some years successfully opposed them, was betrayed into their hands, taken to Rome, dragged in chains through the city to adorn the triumph of Marius, and subsequently starved to death in the same prison beneath the Capitol, where the apostle St. Peter, and St. Paul were afterwards confined.

From this time, although various native princes were appointed to the different African kingdoms, the power of the Romans became more and more firmly established.

Juba I., King of Mauritania, favoured the cause of Pompey against Julius Cæsar, and took up arms against him, joining his forces to those of Scipio. He was however defeated, and totally abandoned by his subjects. Preferring death by his own hand, to being dragged captive to Rome, he killed himself, and his kingdom became a Roman province, of which Sallust, the historian, was the first governor.

Juba II., son of this prince, graced Cæsar's triumph. He was then but a child, and was educated at Rome, acquiring a high reputation as a man of talents and learning. Augustus Cæsar gave him in marriage, Cleopatra, daughter of Antony and Cleopatra, and, conferring upon him the title of king, restored him all those African possessions which had belonged to his father.

He founded the city of Julia Cæsarea (Cherchel), enriched and beautified it, and made it the capital of his kingdom. Many traces of it still remain. During a prosperous reign of forty-five years he occupied himself chiefly with the arts and sciences, and so greatly was he

esteemed, that the Athenians raised statues to him, and his own subjects worshipped him as a deity. Juba wrote a history of Rome in Greek, often quoted by ancient writers, but of which only a few fragments remain. He also wrote the history of Arabia and various treatises, now lost, on the drama, painting, grammar, Roman antiquities, the nature of animals, &c. He is called by Plutarch "the greatest historian among kings." He died about A.D. 19, leaving a son, Ptolemy, the last independent prince of the African provinces. After having, in conjunction with the Roman general Dolabella, put down an insurrection of the wilder tribes, Ptolemy was summoned to Rome by the tyrant Caligula, and there put to death, A.D. 40, Caligula being, it is said, not only annoyed at the magnificent state kept by the African prince, but also jealous of his good looks.

Mauritania again reverted to Rome, and from this time the history of North-western Africa follows the varying fortunes of the Roman empire.

"It is from the period of the next three hundred years that most of the Roman remains in Algeria date."—*Murray's Guide.*

"This period witnessed the greatest development of art on the soil of Africa. The prosperity of the country was at its height; now were built those monuments which twelve centuries of barbarous devastation were not able to efface. Tiberius issued a decree which forbade Africa being chosen as a place of exile, 'for,' said the Emperor, 'those who leave Rome in Italy find a second Rome there.'"—*Gaskell.*

In spite of its prosperity, the country does not seem to have been in a very settled condition, for we hear of continual outbreaks of the Barbarians, of Julia Cæsarea being utterly destroyed by Firmus, a rebel Moorish chieftain, and, indeed, of constant tumults. The introduction of Christianity, instead of acting as a soothing influence upon the

motley population, seems only to have added fresh elements of strife, not alone in the bitterness engendered by heathen persecutions, but in the far more bitter hatred of rival sects and opposing views, among the converts to the new religion.

At the same time, the early Church of Africa was distinguished by an extraordinary amount of zeal and learning, and its bishops rank among them, names no less venerable than St. Augustine and St. Cyprian, polemical writers no less celebrated than Tertullian. "Africa, not Rome," says Dean Milman, "gave birth to Latin Christianity."

"This whole region, once the scene of Carthaginian greatness, abounded with Christianity in the second century, though of the manner of the introduction of the gospel or of the proceedings of its first planters we have no account."—*Milner's Church History.*

But Irenæus, in the third century, speaks of the Churches of Libya; and Tertullian, who wrote some few years later than Irenæus, asserts that the Mauritanians and Gætulians, "together with hidden unknown tribes, provinces, and islands which could scarcely be numbered, all had heard and received the religion of Christ."

Indeed, in a council held at Carthage in A.D. 253, and presided over by St. Cyprian, we hear of no fewer than eighty-seven African bishops being present, besides an equal number of presbyters and deacons.

All this time we hear nothing of Icosium, except that it was the seat of a bishopric, and therefore possessing a Christian population. Meanwhile the decline and fall of the Roman empire are preparing.

"As the Roman power declined in Africa, the boundary of civilized

manners and cultivated land insensibly contracted; added to which, the country from the confines of Cyrene to the columns of Hercules was distracted with religious discord. The source of the division was derived from a double election, A.D. 312, in the Church of Carthage, the second in rank and opulence of the ecclesiastical thrones of the West, producing a schism in the Church which lasted in Africa until Christianity itself was extinguished."—*Gibbon.*

The Emperor Constantine having been called on to decide between the rival bishops, Donatus, the rejected candidate, with his followers, constituted themselves a separate sect, and, being subjected to persecution by the orthodox, retired in great numbers to the Atlas Mountains, where they resisted an armed force sent to "convert" them, and spread terror through the country by their frantic fanaticism.

The great Roman empire was falling to pieces, borne down by its own weight and the corruption that had spread through every part of it, to its very core. But it was not thus permitted to die of "calm decay." On all sides the Barbarian hordes pressed into it, sweeping away to a great extent the complicated fabric of its civilization in which it gloried, but breathing into its feeble body a new spirit of life and youth.

The outlying African provinces were not exempt from the rough discipline to which the rest of the empire was subjected, nor to the demoralization which preceded it.

Now comes the romantic and touching episode of the treason and repentance of Count Boniface.

Placidia, daughter of Theodosius, whose varying career had found her at one time captive in the Gothic camp, then wife to a Barbarian prince, and now mother of a Roman emperor, ruled the state for her son, Valentinian III. Her

two generals and councillors were Ætius, and Boniface governor of Africa, the friend of St. Augustine.

Boniface had at all times been faithful to the cause of Placidia. Ætius, who was of Barbaric origin, had more than once entered into negotiations with the Goths and Huns, who were threatening the empire. But being jealous of Boniface, and of the influence he possessed over the mind of his mistress, he accused him of treachery.

He secretly persuaded Placidia to recall Boniface from his government, and at the same time advised Boniface to refuse obedience, assuring him that his death was intended. Boniface fell into the trap laid for him.

The charge of treachery was utterly groundless, but Placidia, surrounded by a thousand difficulties, believed it. Boniface was disgraced from his command. Stung with indignation, he committed the crime of which he had been accused, and invited Genseric, chief of the Vandals, from Spain into the African provinces.

Genseric did not hesitate to accept the invitation offered him. Having passed like a scourge over France and Spain, he crossed the Mediterranean at the head of eighty thousand men, and entered into possession of the whole northern coast of Africa from Tangiers to Cherchel. Everywhere the persecuted Donatists joined his standard. No sooner was the deed done than the double dealing of Ætius came to light; and Count Boniface, repenting bitterly, set himself to the task of undoing his own work. But it was easier to invite the Vandal hordes than to be quit of them. They were by no means disposed to give up what they had acquired.

A struggle ensued, in the course of which they not only

established themselves firmly on the ground they had hitherto possessed, from the pillars of Hercules to Hippo (Bone), but even in time extended their conquests to Carthage. Hippo, into which city Boniface shut himself, withstood a siege of fourteen months. In this town lay the aged Augustine on his death-bed. He did not live to see the triumph of the Vandal power, but he lived long enough to know that their triumph was inevitable, and that it was his friend and disciple who, in his fit of wild rage, had thus brought destruction on the land.

At length, after another battle and another defeat, Boniface gave up all for lost, and sailed away for Italy. He met his rival and detractor, Ætius, in single combat, and fell by his hand.

The Vandals were Christians, though of the Arian sect, and their occupation of Africa does not seem to have been accompanied with the same terrorism which they exercised in other countries. The inhabitants were permitted to a great extent to retain their possessions, and even their laws and internal administration were respected.

Genseric, having established himself firmly on the land, devoted himself to the formation of a fleet, with which he dominated the Mediterranean, conquered Sicily, Sardinia, and the Balearic Isles, and, landing on the coast of Italy, carried Rome by assault and sacked it.

The power of the Vandals waned with the death of Genseric in 477, and Belisarius, the celebrated Roman general, once more, in 533, restored Africa to the Roman empire and to the orthodox religion. The triumphs of Belisarius were much more sweeping and devastating than those of an ordinary conqueror. He did his utmost to

exterminate the Vandalic population, and those who were not destroyed preserved their lives only by flight to the mountain fastnesses. There, in the remote Kabyle tribes, the golden-haired descendants of the fugitive Vandals may yet be traced among their swarthier-skinned brethren.

The Roman power never again really flourished in Africa. At one moment the army mutinied, at another the Berber tribes, descending from the mountains, seized the strongholds which the degenerate Romans were too feeble to maintain. In this unsettled condition the country fell an easy prey to the Arabs, who, in the strength of their new faith—a mere handful of men, "with the sword in one hand and the Koran in the other"—had already conquered Egypt (641), and were pressing on their victorious course westward. In the caliphate of Osman, son-in-law of the Prophet, Akbah-ben-Nefa, having swept like a torrent through the land, penetrated to the western coast of Africa, his career, though not his ambition, stayed by the prospect of the boundless ocean. Riding his horse into the Atlantic waves, Akbah was found lamenting that he could go no farther "to preach the unity of God."

The arguments of his discourse had been powerful and sweeping ones!

After a sharp but short struggle, the impetus of the Mahomedan invasion carried all before it, and the conquered accepted not only the rule but also the religion of the conquerors. That which the Vandals had spared was shattered by the ruder hands of the followers of the Prophet, and in their wake not only Christianity, but civilization, the arts, knowledge, all disappeared. Unlike the Vandals, they left nothing as they found it. With laws, polity, and

religion of their own, fiercely intolerant of any other system, and urged on by an arrogant fanaticism, they passed over the land as destroyers.

The Church—the Christian Church of Africa—which had been adorned by the virtues of St. Augustine and sealed by the blood of St. Cyprian, crumbled away at touch of the Moslem scimitar, and its place has known it no more.

Indeed, torn as it was by factions, demoralized by schisms, and overladen as it had become with superstitious observances, the Christianity of Africa had left in it very little of life or energy—no front which it could offer to the severe iconoclastic zeal of Islamism, no answering shout to the war-cry with which half the civilized world rang, and at which it trembled, "There is but one God, and Mahomet is his prophet."

Those whose faith had been dissipated in petty disputes, whose ritual was a modified idolatry, whose liberty of conscience had but resulted in license of morals, had little to oppose to the fervour of a religion which, if not true, was strong; if not pure, was at least purer than that which it sought to displace.

The faith of Islam triumphed, and barbarism with it.

The only organized and determined resistance that the Arab invaders met with in Africa, came not from the citizens of the Roman empire, not from the descendants of the renowned Carthaginian warriors, but from those half-savage and fiercely independent tribes of Berbers or Kabyles, who, shut up in their mountain fastnesses, and protected by their boundless deserts, had for the most part set the power of imperial Rome at defiance—sheltering fugitives from its justice or tyranny, allying themselves with the heretical

Donatists, receiving in their midst the defeated Vandals, treating the Roman colonists as friends or foes as the fancy of the moment took them, but through all unsubdued and uncontrollable.

As the Roman power declined in Africa, the native influence had gained ground. For instance, the city of Algiers itself, being destroyed by the Vandals, was rebuilt and inhabited at the time of the Mahomedan invasion by a Berber tribe.

This is but one example of a state of things which was repeating itself all over the country, and it was the Berbers who, with a patriotism greater than that displayed by the luxurious Greco-Romans, most successfully, and for the longest period, resisted the Arab arms.

Now is the time of the somewhat mythical Queen Kaïna, prophetess as well as queen, who reigned on Mount Aurès. Descending upon the coast, she not only defeated the Saracens, but drove them for a time from the country. After their retreat the victorious prophetess, it is said, assembled her chiefs about her, and proposed a measure of strange and savage policy. "Our cities," she said, "and the gold and silver which they contain, attract the cupidity of the Arabs. These vile metals are not the objects of our ambition. We can content ourselves with the simple fruits of the soil. Let us, then, destroy these cities, bury in their ruins these pernicious treasures, and when the avarice of our foes shall want temptation, they will, perhaps, cease to threaten the tranquillity of our land." The proposal was accepted with applause, and from Tangiers to Tripoli the whole coast was devastated by the patriotic Berbers, the stately groves of palms cut down, the cities destroyed, the

buildings razed to the ground, the whole fertile country converted into a desert.

All this story of Queen Kaïna is thought by Gibbon to have more the air of a legend, invented by the Arabs to account for their wholesale devastation of the country, than of history. But it is certain that the Berbers, at this time, came prominently forward in their efforts to stem the tide of the Mahomedan aggression, and almost, if not quite, succeeded.

They at least succeeded in maintaining their own independence, though accepting after a time the religion of the dominant race. Retiring at length to their mountains—such of them as escaped massacre—they bid defiance to their enemies among the snows of the Atlas, unsubdued as ever.

In 711, not the Mahomedan Alexander who had regretted the want of more worlds to conquer, but another of his race, crossed the Straits of Gibraltar, and found a new world for his exploits, and a new scene for his fierce missionary labours in the fruitful land of Spain. Many of the Moors followed the Arabs in this adventurous enterprise, and the African name was given by Europeans to the Eastern invaders. During the next century the provinces of Africa were under the rule of Emirs appointed by the Caliph, and the history of the country becomes only a series of struggles, between the representatives of rival Mahomedan sects and dynasties, which possess but a very small amount of interest.

In 944 Ziri, governor of Asshir, one of the provinces of Central Mogreb, built the Arab city of Algiers called El-Djezaïr, the isles, from four little islands which studded

the port, and which are now covered by the works of the harbour. But under the Arabs, Algiers never rose to be a city of very great importance. It belonged to Tlemçen, then to Bougie, was again made part of the province of Tlemçen, passing successively through various phases of prosperity and decadence.

El-Bekri, who visited Algiers in 1067, speaks of it in terms of admiration:—

"This ancient and beautiful city can boast of various magnificent monuments of antiquity, and some gateways of very excellent construction. The harbour is perfectly safe, and has in it a spring of fresh water. There are to be constantly seen here vessels from the different provinces of Africa, from Spain, and other countries."

At the end of the thirteenth century another old traveller, El-Abdery, after having admired the site of Algiers, remarks—

"This town is deprived of its science as an exile is separated from his family. There is not one man left in it who could make any pretension to learning, nor, indeed, an individual who has the least instruction."

When the Moors were chased from Spain by Ferdinand the Catholic in 1501, they returned to establish themselves on the coast of Africa, and gave themselves up to piracy. The Spaniards followed them across the Mediterranean, and pushed their advantage so far as to possess themselves of Oran, and even in 1510 to storm Algiers. They were unable to hold the town, but they established themselves on a small rocky island immediately fronting the harbour, and not much over two hundred yards from the land. Here, Peter Count de Navarre demolished the tower of observation which had been erected by the Arabs, and

built the famous fortress known as La Peñon, from the Spanish *Pena*, a rock, which for twenty years kept the pirates at bay.

"The presence of the Spanish garrison in the harbour prevented the Arabs from using their port, and they were compelled to seek a refuge for their vessels on the shore of Bab-el-Oued, near the mouth of a rivulet which gave its name to this portion of the city. For the rest, this result, of which the Spaniards were not a little proud, was only disastrous to the unfortunate Christian slaves, who were compelled to drag the pirate ships up the shelving shore, by the simple force of their arms."—*L'Algérie. M. Berbrugger.*

The presence of the Spaniards so near their doors becoming intolerable to the Algerines, their Emir, Selem Ben Teumi, called to his aid a famous Turkish corsair, Baba-Aroudj-Barbarossa.

This adventurer and his brother, Kheir-ed-din, sons of a fisherman of Mitylene, had long been the terror of the Mediterranean, and were now attempting to establish themselves by seizing one of the seaboard towns. Repulsed at Bougie by the Spaniards, who held possession of that place, they gladly availed themselves of Selem's invitation to aid him in the defence of Algiers. The sequel may easily be imagined. A romantic story is told in connection with Barbarossa's usurpation.

The Emir Selem had for wife Zaphira, a Berber princess of great beauty; and the hope of possessing her, even more than the desire for power, urged the pirate, it is said, to the crime which he committed. The unfortunate Selem was found dead—strangled—in the bath, and Barbarossa, making a great parade of sorrow, was immediately proclaimed King of Algiers by his pirate followers.

Zaphira, though kept as a kind of state prisoner, was

treated with the utmost deference. Soon Barbarossa sent messengers to her, proposing marriage.

Zaphira returned for answer that while her husband's murder remained unavenged, no other man should claim her.

The pirate, anxious to approve himself to the lady, instantly commanded a large reward to be offered for the detection of the murderers, and actually had thirty persons executed in expiation of the crime. Then he addressed himself again to the princess.

"What you required is done," he said. "There can be no further barrier to oppose between us."

"You, and you alone, are the murderer of my husband!" was the message returned by the widow.

Barbarossa, enraged at this defiance, made his way to the apartments of the Princess, to force her to listen to his suit.

Zaphira, on his approach, drank a cup of poison which she had prepared for such an emergency, and fell dead before his face, while the tyrant revenged himself for the loss of his prey, by putting to death all the women who had been her attendants.

This story is related by an old traveller and historian, Laugier de Tassy, who even gives the text of the letters which passed between the Princess and the corsair, though he is candid enough to confess, that he cannot altogether vouch for the verbal accuracy of the correspondence!

Barbarossa reigned two years amid bloodshed and rapine like the terrible old tyrant that he was, and was killed in a battle with the Spaniards on the frontier of Morocco in 1518, fighting bravely to the last.

Kheir-ed-din, his brother, was on the death of Barbarossa made King of Algiers, and he set himself seriously to the task of ousting the Spaniards from that island-fortress, which had been such a grief and mortification to the murdered Selem, and had led to his unfortunate invitation to the corsair brothers.

Kheir-ed-din sent two young Moors to the fortress, with the story that they were slaves escaped from their masters, begging protection, and desiring to be instructed in the Christian religion. Martin de Vargas, governor of the Peñon, received the youths kindly, but observing, some little time afterwards, that they were endeavouring to establish a communication with the shore, he ordered them to be hanged as spies outside the walls of the fortress that faced Algiers. The sight of this punishment raised the irritation of the Algerines to a still higher pitch. Kheir-ed-din resolved on storming the fortress, the more so as he had recently captured a Venetian vessel, which had supplied him both with guns and powder.

He summoned the garrison to surrender, and on their refusal began, very much to their surprise, to fire on the fort from the shore, for hitherto the Algerines had possessed no cannon of sufficient range, to cover the two hundred yards that separated them from the Spaniards. The Spaniards defended themselves heroically, but after a siege of seventeen days were compelled to surrender. Martin de Vargas, the governor, who was seriously wounded during the siege, was cruelly beaten to death by Kheir-ed-din in his palace of the Djenina. It was during the reign of Kheir-ed-din that the works of the harbour were begun, and from this time dates the Turkish supremacy in Northern

Africa. The pirate Prince finding himself threatened, not only by the superior forces of the Spaniards, but by the discontent of the Algerines, placed himself under the protection of the Porte, and surrendered the sovereignty of Algiers to Selim I., Sultan of Turkey, in exchange for a force of two thousand janissaries. He was appointed Pasha, and was afterwards promoted to the rank of high admiral of the Turkish fleet. He conquered Tunis, and gained a great naval victory over the Spaniards in 1538.

In 1541 the Emperor Charles V. undertook his memorable and disastrous expedition against the Algerine pirates. The invading force consisted of three hundred and sixty vessels, commanded by Andrew Doria, and an army of twenty-four thousand men, with the Emperor himself as general. A bull of the Pope promised plenary indulgence to all those who fought against the infidel, and the ships bore each on the prow, a crucifix as a symbol of the holy cause in which the Spanish arms were embarked.

The troops were landed on the eastern side of the Bay of Algiers, and the Spaniards, marching at once to the city, invested it, and encamped themselves in a stronghold on the heights above, which completely dominated it—a stronghold still known as the "Fort de l'Empereur."

The water-supply of the city, which it is to be supposed was still furnished by the old Roman aqueducts, was cut off, and the town generally so thoroughly panic-stricken by the approach of the Spanish army, that it was on the point of capitulating.

The Pasha Assam, successor to Kheir-ed-din, had gathered his counsellors together, and all were in a terrible state of perplexity and alarm, when, it is said, a certain fanatical

dervish appeared before the divan, and, urging patience, prophesied that within a short time a great disaster would overtake the Spanish arms, and that God, not man, would be the means of their downfall.

Whether prophesied or not, the disaster took place. The following day a tremendous storm coming from the north drove the whole fleet from its insecure moorings, and washed away the entrenchments of the Spaniards, while the violent rain rendered their gunpowder useless. The Algerines now sallying out, attacked them with great fury, and completely cut them in pieces.

One hundred and fifty of their ships had been wrecked by the tempest. In those that were left the discomfited Spaniards beat a hasty retreat from the inhospitable shore, leaving one-third of the army either dead or captive in the hands of the Turks, with an enormous quantity of treasure.

After this signal victory the insolence of the Algerine pirates knew no bounds. Acknowledged masters of the Mediterranean, they carried on their trade of robbery and violence, not only upon the sea, but on the shores of all the neighbouring and even distant states, defying the united powers of Christendom to check their depredations or to punish their crimes. They proclaimed themselves, and were believed to be, invincible, and the great European nations, hopeless of conquering them, resigned themselves, one after the other, to the shameful expedient of purchasing immunity from their atrocities by the payment of a species of black-mail—an expedient which, it may be imagined, was only very partially successful, and which led to endless complications.

CHAPTER VI.

CHRISTIAN SLAVERY IN ALGIERS.

"Nido Algeri di ladri infame ed empio."
Tasso.

THE late M. Berbrugger, in his "Algérie," writes—

"The historians of Algiers, when arriving at the unknown period of Turkish domination, where the works of Haedo and Father Dan fail them, have adopted a very convenient means of concealing their ignorance. 'It would be useless,' they all with remarkable unanimity agree in saying at this particular point, 'to pursue further, these annals of horror and bloodshed;' acting on this principle, they quietly skip over a space of a century and a half at least."

We venture to follow the example so worthily set us.

Up to the beginning of the seventeenth century the kingdom continued to be governed by pashas or viceroys sent from Constantinople, who were continually being changed or murdered, and "concerning whom," says an old historian, "we find nothing very remarkable, further than that their avarice and tyranny were intolerable, both to the Algerines and to the Turks themselves."

After this period Algiers was created into a beylik, or semi-independent state, owing, indeed, allegiance to Turkey, but electing its own governor, or bey, and forming with

other beyliks what were known as the Barbary States, and which were at once the horror and the dread of all Europe. The origin of this name is referred to in rather amusing fashion by certain old writers.

"It is said to have been on account of their rude speech and uncouth manners, that the Arabs named these African people Barbarians and their country Barbary, but, whatever may be the etymology of the word, it well consorts with the character of these brutal pirates." —*Pierre Dan. Histoire de Barbarie et de ses Corsaires*, 1649.

Laugier de Tassy, a French traveller, who writes in 1725, takes a more kindly view of the matter.

"The kingdom of Algiers makes a part of Barbary in Africa, and it is for this reason that these and the neighbouring peoples are called Barbarians. This word, according to our notions, comprehends all that is most cruel, unjust, and opposed to religion and nature. Ill-informed people imagine that a native of Barbary must be a kind of African monster, controlled only by instincts such as are possessed by wild beasts, and that it is for this reason that this part of Africa has been called by such a name. But those who take the pains to read the history of many travellers to these countries, will convince themselves that there are a number of nations in the world who live in greater ignorance, and are in consequence more savage—approaching, in short, nearer to the brutes, than the inhabitants of Barbary, who are for the most part very civilized.

"The origin of the word Barbary, according to Marmol, comes from Ber, a desert, in the Arab tongue. John Leon, the old historian, says that the Arabs called the inhabitants of the country by this name, to mark the sound which they made in speaking, and which seemed to them an unintelligible jargon, but I do not think this etymology would satisfy the reader. I would rather advise that the word was derived from the ancient Roman custom, of calling barbarians all people whose manners were strange to them, and when the arms of Julius Cæsar and Augustus conquered that part of Africa which was called Mauritania, the country was named by them Barbary, because the people who inhabited it, were the most uncivilized whom the Romans had ever yet seen."—*Laugier de Tassy. Histoire d'Alger*, 1725 (*old translation*).

The history of the Turkish rule in Algiers is, in truth,

little but a catalogue of crimes, which become wearisome by their sameness. We tire of the perpetual changes of equally worthless pashas and deys, of intrigues, treachery, and murders, and can scarcely rouse ourselves to pity or indignation, when we hear of three of these tyrants being elected to power and assassinated all in one day. We seem grateful to be rid of so many at once, but hydra-headed they spring up again and again for our discomfiture. The dey, at last, from being an absolute tyrant, sinks into the position of tool or puppet, continually set up and knocked down by the janissaries, or Turkish soldiers, in whose hands all the real power of the state lies.

"The city is strongly fortified and garrisoned by the janissaries. Of these there are six thousand, who absolutely govern the kingdom, recognising no authority, and putting their Bashaw in prison if he displeases them. They are almost all men without faith, conscience, or religion, collected from all the states of Turkey and Christendom, and banished or fugitive from their own countries for the enormity of their crimes. They are shaven all but the moustache, splendidly armed, and handsomely dressed."—*Voyages de M. de Breve*, 1605.

"The Bashaw, the chief governor of all, admits a kind of subjection to the Grand Seignor in words, but makes little account of his orders. The soldiery is more dreadful to him than the Grand Seignor; accordingly his greatest work is to see them punctually paid at every new moon, for if he delays the money three hours after it is due, he is in danger of being strangled, or at least cast into prison."—*Relation de la Captivité du Sieur Emanuele d'Aranda*, 1665 (*old translation*).

"Although the election of the Dey is, according to the principles of the Regency, vested in the Divan, it is usually the result of the intrigues of a predominant faction amongst the janissaries, and is generally a sanguinary tragedy. A dey is murdered to make room for some more fortunate adventurer; his immediate friends and adherents perish, or are plundered or exiled, and the public business or tranquillity is not interrupted beyond twenty-four hours. These revolutions succeed each other with a rapidity, which can hardly be credited by those who are unacquainted with the barbarous character and manners of the Turks. A Dey of Algiers, while alive, is the most despotic and implicitly obeyed monarch on earth; but his reign is always precarious,

and it is by *mere accident* if he dies a natural death. Neither can a person elected, refuse or resign the honour of ruling in Algiers; he must either reign or perish."—*Shaler's Sketches of Algiers*, 1816.

Uninstructive and unamusing, however, as the internal history of Algiers may be during all this time, its connection with the outer world has for us a most sad and thrilling interest, since for a period of nearly five hundred years, this unimportant little spot of African coast, was the scene of the most extraordinary outrage and tyranny ever suffered by modern nations. When we read that there were at one time forty thousand Christians in slavery in Algiers, all prizes, captured in piratical expeditions; that the pirate fleet consisted of three thousand sail; that during one space of six years, from 1674—80, three hundred and fifty English ships *alone* were seized by the Algerines, and no less than six thousand English subjects sold into slavery, or ransomed only at exorbitant prices; when we hear that some of these unfortunate persons languished for scores of years in their miserable captivity, subjected to the most cruel treatment, suffering hardships inconceivable, starvation, and blows; when we find that among the number of these unhappy slaves were many men of rank and influence, and of all the nations of Europe; when we consider that the insult and injury thus suffered by Christendom were inflicted by a small and semi-barbarous state, without revenue save what was taken in piratical enterprise, possessing but a handful of troops, and they foreign mercenaries—we are filled with astonishment that so great an anomaly should have been permitted in the civilized world, such terrors suffered by the great maritime powers of Europe, not for five hundred, but for fifty years!

Added to which, it was admitted by all who visited Algiers that the defences of the pirate city were by no means impregnable.

"In this piratical city the miseries of slavery have consumed the lives of six hundred thousand Christians since the year 1536, at which time Chereddin Barbarossa brought it under his own power, but it is hard to imagine why its government being so ill-administered could endure so long, making that hole dreadful to all Europe, since its strength, situation, and fortresses are by no means considerable."—*History of Algiers. Emanuele d'Aranda*, 1665.

"The walls of the city are partly of brick and partly of stone, with square turrets, and there are numerous fortresses, but the city could never defend itself on the land side, because there are a number of hills and mountains all round it, from which it could easily be battered down."—*Dan's Histoire de Barbarie*, 1649.

"The walls are weak and of little defence, unless where they are further secured by some additional fortifications. A ditch formerly surrounded the whole city to the landward side, which is at present almost entirely filled up except at the south and west gates.

"Towards the sea it is better fortified. The battery of the mole gate upon the east angle of the city is mounted with several long pieces of ordnance, but as none of the fortresses are assisted with either mines or outworks, and as the soldiery cannot be kept up to any regular course of duty, a few resolute battalions protected by a small squadron of ships, might soon make themselves masters of the place."—*Dr. Shaw's Travels*, 1720—30.

Yet though various expeditions were undertaken by the different naval powers against the Barbary States, and though the condition of the Christian slaves kept captive by the corsairs, was felt to be a crying evil and scandal, very little was effected.

Spain seems to have been specially unfortunate in her chivalrous enterprises against her piratical neighbours over the sea, for we read, as a sequel to the unfortunate expedition of Charles V., "In the year 1601 the Spaniards, under the command of Doria, the Genoese admiral, made another

attempt on Algiers, in which they were *more fortunate than usual*, being *only* driven back by contrary winds, so that they came off without loss."

The French, the Dutch, the Venetians, and the English were engaged in constant petty warfare with the pirate fleets, but, as a rule, their achievements were not very striking.

Here and there "a great and glorious victory" was announced over the common enemy—such, for instance, as Admiral Blake's celebrated attack on Tunis in 1655, or the bombardment of Algiers by Du Quesne in 1682—but the results of these triumphs were neither lasting nor satisfactory. A year or two after some such signal defeat, the pirate galleys were sweeping the seas with renewed force and vigour, carrying terror and destruction wherever they went, making sudden descents upon peaceful seaboard villages in the dead of the night, harrying the helpless inhabitants, and threatening every traveller with a fate more terrible than death.

"Those who have never been at Algiers and witnessed the fate to which Christians falling into the hands of the Barbarians are condemned, cannot form any idea of that greatest calamity which fortune has in store for humanity, or into what an abyss of sorrow and wretchedness their fellow-creatures thus situated have been plunged."—*Pananti's Narration*, 1814.

A description of the life of these unfortunate captives is thus given by this writer, who was himself captured by the pirates in the year 1813:—

"No sooner is any one declared a slave than he is instantly stripped of his clothes and covered with a species of sackcloth. He is also generally left without shoes or stockings, and often obliged to work bareheaded in the scorching rays of an African sun.

"Some of these wretched beings are destined to make ropes and sails for the squadron. These are superintended by keepers, who carry whips and constantly extort money from their victims, as the price of a somewhat less rigour in the execution of their duty. Others belong to the Dey's household, and many are employed by the rich Moors who may have bought them at market, in the lowest drudgery of domestic employment. Some, like the beasts of burden, are employed in carrying stones and wood for any public buildings that may be going on. These are usually in chains, and justly considered as the most unfortunate among their oppressed brethren. What a perpetuity of terrors and series of painful and monotonous days must not theirs be, without a bed to lie on, raiment to cover them, or food to support nature!

"Awoke at daylight in the prison where they are shut up at night, they are sent to work with the most abusive threats, and sink under the weight and severity of their keepers' whips. Made to sink wells and clean sewers, yoked with the ass and the mule, hundreds die miserably every year. The slightest offence is punished with two hundred blows on the feet or back, and when exhausted or sick, the wretched sufferers are abandoned like dogs by the roadside."

Pananti relates the case of a poor ragged old man, whom he saw sinking under the weight of a heavy burden he was too feeble to carry further:—

"'Poor Christians!' he cried; 'there is no help for them. Their groans are not heard in heaven. I was born in Naples. I was noble, rich, and illustrious; see how slavery can change the face and form. It is now eleven years since my sufferings began. I am forgotten by all the world.'"

This was only one case among hundreds. Mrs. Broughton, daughter of the English consul at Algiers at the beginning of this century, and who writes of her "Six Years' Residence" there, says—

"It was pitiful to go to the Marina. The poor slaves would gather round us, and, kissing the hem of our garments, would throw themselves at our feet, when our janissary or dragoman would beat and knock them out of our path, despite of all our orders to the contrary."

This, too, was in the days when the Algerine power was beginning to decline, and the presence of the English consul was felt to be a terror and wholesome restraint, even by the iniquitous Government of the Dey.

The greater number of slaves were at this time Italian and Portuguese. Mrs. Broughton writes—

"My father successfully negotiated for the release of five hundred and eighty-four Portuguese slaves, some of whom had been in captivity over thirty years. But on making peace with Portugal the Dey immediately declared war against America by way of indemnity. 'For,' said the Dey, 'if we had not some nation to cruise against we should be ruined.'"

The following is a description given of the bagno, or state prison of the slaves, by Captain Croker, R.N., who visited Algiers in 1815:—

"This frightful prison is to be found in one of the narrowest lanes of Algiers. A little square court at the entrance alone affords air and light to the captives. Their daily food consists of two black loaves of half a pound weight each, and those who work are allowed, in addition, ten olives. But as no work is done on Friday, the Sabbath of the Turks, these unfortunate people are shut up all through that day, and no provision whatever is made for their sustenance by the Algerine Government, but water. Happily the charity of a Turk supplements this. This humane man, who had in his youth himself the misfortune to be a slave, has left some money by which every Friday one loaf is supplied to each prisoner. It is worthy of remark that it is a Mahomedan, an Algerine, who has thus mitigated the sufferings of the unhappy captives, and the Power which keeps them in slavery, tyrannical as it is, concerns itself as to the faithful execution of this beneficent bequest."

Still to quote Captain Croker:—

"From the court I went up a stone staircase into a gallery, from which led a number of dark rooms, the doors and windows of which were strongly secured by irons. Two of these chambers contained twenty-four beds or hammocks suspended one over the other, and

formed of some branches of trees interlaced. Miserable as these beds were, they could not be had without payment.

"The atmosphere of the place was so impure, and the stench so repulsive, that one of the persons who accompanied me was taken ill immediately upon entering."

This was the home of the slaves belonging to the Dey, who were, for the most part, employed in the public works, in the harbour, fortifications, &c.

The Dey claimed the eighth part of every prize captured, and chose his slaves, taking those whom he believed to be of highest rank, and who would therefore pay handsomely for their ransom. The rest were sold at a public market in the city.

The following is the account given of some of his sufferings by le Sieur Emanuele d'Aranda, a Flemish gentleman, who with two other friends was captured by the pirates in the year 1642. He was sold in the public market.

"A certain old man with a stick in his hand," he writes, "took me by the arm and led me several times up and down the market place, and those who were desirous to buy me asked me my name, country, and profession. They examined my hands to see if they were hard and brawny by working, and caused me to open my mouth to see whether my teeth were able to overcome biscuit in the galleys. Then they caused us all to sit down, and the old man took the first and led him three or four times up and down the market, crying out *arrache arrache*, that is to say, who offers most? The first being sold was set on one side of the market, and another was served after the same manner. I learned that I was bought by a rich pirate named Ali Pelegin."—*Old translation.*

The fate of the Christian slaves bought by private individuals, was often very much less terrible than that of the unfortunate state captives, who were condemned to labour at the public works.

As a rule, it was to the master's interest to treat his slave with a certain amount of consideration, so that, at least, his health should not fail him, and often he acquired the position of a valued and trusted servant; but the treatment experienced by the unhappy slaves of Ali Pelegin seems to have been inconceivably cruel. This man, who possessed between five and six hundred slaves, did not feel himself bound to provide in any way for their support, not even the pitiful black loaves supplied to the galley-slaves by the State. Instead, he gave them each day, three hours' exemption from labour, during which time they were permitted to work or steal for themselves. They practised various trades, and followed all kinds of small occupations, for the sake of earning a few coppers, but many, we are assured, died of absolute starvation, and by far the greater number supported themselves entirely by thieving.

M. d'Aranda writes—

"Finding that we were to work every day, yet not have a piece of bread from the patron, and because we had not confidence and ability enough to steal—for that profession requires practice, especially in a country where there are so many thieves, and consequently people are more distrustful—the Knight de Cherf, M. Calouen, and I resolved to go to an Italian Jew merchant, named Francesco Capate, resident at Algiers, and to receive of him seventy-five patagoons, conditionally that he should be paid one hundred at Antwerp."—*Old translation.*

Monsieur d'Aranda and his friends, though men of wealth and position, were careful to conceal their names and rank, for fear of exciting the rapacity of the pirates. It appears from his account that at this time, at least, the amount of ransom was the chief point considered by the corsairs, and certain renegade European slaves were in the habit of visiting the captives on their arrival in Algiers, and, under

pretence of sympathizing with them, would extract from them the secret, of how much their friends might be willing to give, or contribute for their release. Monsieur d'Aranda gives a touching account of the sufferings he underwent in the bagno, or slave prison, of Ali Pelegin :—

"In the morning we were roused from our miserable rest on the bare stones by the keepers, who assailed us with abuse. 'Get up, you dogs! Come down, you scoundrels!'—this was our morning salutation. We were then marched away in gangs to work, accompanied by guardians provided with whips and cudgels. We were set to the hardest work—rope-making, delving, corn-grinding, and carrying.

"When the wheat was pounded it was put into bags to be carried up forty steps into the granary.

"On one occasion, by misfortune, there fell a little of it on the ground, which the guardian, taking note of, said to me, *Pilla esse cane*, that is, 'Take it up, you dog;' but I not understanding, he gave me three or four blows with a cudgel over the back, which caused the blood almost to gush out, for I had nothing about me but my shirt. The wheat being put into bags, he gave me a load to carry, but I had hardly gone four or five steps so laden, ere the bag, for want of strength, began to slip down my head, so that the guardian was forced to be so kind as to help it up again, but in requital for his assistance he gave me three or four blows over the face with his fist.

"Henceforth, on account of my weakness, and in consideration of four ryals a month, I was put to lighter labour, such as carrying pots of water for the guardian's wife. I was extremely pleased with this new employment. She was a negress, but a very good-natured person, and sometimes gave me a piece of bread or a mess of pottage."—*Old translation.*

Pananti, in his "Narration," gives a very sad account of the moral condition of the unhappy captives :—

"A slave after awhile begins even to despise himself. The soul is often purified in the crucible of adversity, but in the state of slavery there is something so abject and forlorn, that it destroys courage and quenches all the fire of generous sentiments, depriving its victim at once of mind and dignity. Sorrow vitiates the heart when it breaks the spirit; virtue is weakened or even extinguished. Religion, too,

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that column of heaven to which we cling when all around us totters, ceases to afford consolation to the heart which is ulcerated; those who come to regard themselves as utterly abandoned upon earth, no longer look to heaven for consolation, and in their relations with their fellow-men, instead of uniting for mutual help, hatred and enmity embitter their distress. For he who has suffered from man's inhumanity to man, feels that the streams of pity are dried up within him."

Laugier de Tassy, who takes a much more favourable view of the treatment experienced by the slaves than other writers, is loud in proclaiming their demoralization. He says—

"It is rare to find slaves who are not addicted to every species of vice, and it is generally their own vicious and bad conduct which causes them to be hardly treated."

M. d'Aranda speaks of the drunkenness, the constant robberies, and savage fights which went on in the bagno among the slaves—fights which sometimes the guardians would put an end to, by shooting promiscuously among the combatants.

This seems the climax of all horrors. The notion of these poor oppressed outcasts preying upon and maltreating one another, expending upon their weaker companions in misfortune, the violence of the passions, which their own sufferings had aroused!

Happily there is a reverse to this sad picture. Dark as was the atmosphere in which they existed, the surrounding gloom seemed only to make the radiance of some pure and holy lives shine with a greater lustre, and the slaves' prison-house of Algiers, foul den though it was, has witnessed some of the noblest deeds of self-devotion, and been the home of some of the grandest souls that ever looked to heaven for help and guidance.

Foremost, perhaps, in the noble band stand those devoted servants of God, who for the sake of ministering to the spiritual wants of the unhappy captives, were found willing to abandon country, friends, and all the blessings of civilization, and to share voluntarily the fate which was justly considered the most terrible which could befall a Christian man. There were many such, who through long years thus suffered all the horrors and hardships of slavery, for the sake of the Master they served, and the people among whom they ministered. The devoted Capuchin, who sacrificed his life's liberty in order to procure a last resting-place for his suffering brethren (page 232), was not alone in his good work; and to the honour of the Spanish priesthood be it said, that it was they who led the van in this chivalrous enterprise.

They, whose burning zeal too often led them into fierce excesses and persecutions, here found a legitimate and grand field of occupation; and the same qualities possibly, which in power made them intolerant and oppressive, enabled them to endure without murmuring, the hardships and miseries to which their mission condemned them.

From the proximity of Spain to Algeria, a vast number of the slaves were naturally belonging to that country, and from a very early time the ministrations of the Spanish priests began.

A society was formed called the Fathers of the Redemption, the members of which body not only travelled throughout Christendom, collecting alms for the ransom of the captives, but also performed the far more arduous and painful duties, of a life spent among these scenes of suffering and horror.

The Mahomedans, religious after their light themselves, seem to have made no objection to the work of the Fathers among the Christian slaves, and even permitted a room to be appropriated for the purpose of a church, in the bagno.

As a rule, except in the case of very young captives, little attempt was made at proselytizing by the Turks. The female captives were most subjected to this, and though there are many instances on record of noble constancy under persecution, it is certain that many of the unhappy women captured by the pirates, were induced to embrace Islamism, for the sake of being treated by their captors with greater respect and consideration.

A certain number of the Christian male slaves also became renegades, and rose to high offices in the State, more than one having attained the somewhat unenviable position of Dey; but, except in rare cases, these defections were rather from self-interest than from compulsion, since as no Mahomedan was allowed to work at the galleys or other laborious employments, it was rather to the interest of the Turks that their slaves should remain Christians; indeed, M. d'Aranda relates the curious case of a renegade, who was beaten back into Christianity by his indignant owner!

The good Fathers of the Redemption did not confine their care to the souls of the slaves; they had some regard to their bodily sufferings, and established a hospital for them at Algiers, where they generously received and tended, as far as they were able, the sick of all Christian nations, and where, after awhile, the Turkish masters would send their slaves during illness, paying a small weekly sum towards their maintenance, instead of permitting them to die like

dogs by the wayside. It is to be feared that they were more urged to this course by interest than by humanity, but in any case the result was good. When a sufficient sum had been collected for the redemption of the captives, certain priests would come over to Africa to negotiate as to the ransom. It was in this way that the historian, Father Pierre Dan, made his voyage to Algiers.

The rule was to redeem first the children and women, as being most likely to be perverted from the faith; next the younger captives, and the remainder by lot. It was on these occasions that many a noble act of self-abnegation was performed, more worthy even of being remembered in history than the celebrated, "Your need is worse than mine," of Sir Philip Sidney.

"You have a wife and children; take my place." "You have aged parents longing for your return; I have none whose heart is breaking at my absence; go instead of me." Incidents such as these were by no means of uncommon occurrence, even among those wretched beings in whom slavery might well have extinguished all generous feeling. Many such grand acts of self-devotion have been recorded; many such exchanges were accepted, always with a fervent promise of ransom on the part of the liberated towards the liberator—a promise which was, it is to be feared, too often forgotten as soon as the dreaded shores of Africa were lost to sight, though several notable instances of gratitude, and honourable performance of pledged word in such cases, are cited by M. d'Aranda. In particular, the case of a Spanish fisherman, who, being released by his master, a Spanish renegade, on condition of paying a certain amount of ransom within a

given number of years, actually at the end of that time came himself to Algiers with the money, to procure which he had parted with almost all that he possessed.

Even among the renegades, whom one is naturally disposed to consider with aversion and contempt, and who were often far more cruel and debased than the Turks themselves, were to be found occasionally instances of kindly and humane feeling.

M. d'Aranda relates—

"The guardian pacha (of the slaves) was a Spanish renegade, named Amet, who, though in the presence of the Turks he would flourish his whip and speak roughly to the Christians, would never so much as touch one of them, and would whisper them not to mind his threats, as he only used them to avoid suspicion."

The English, from time to time, like other nations, organized expeditions for the ransoming of their countrymen fallen into slavery in the Barbary States. Indeed, the Fishmongers' Company has still a fund which was left by a charitable member of the guild for this purpose.

In 1646, amid the troubles of Charles I. and his Parliament, we hear that "a ship of strength, called the *Charles*," was sent over to Algiers with a gargasoon of money and goods, under command of one E. Cason, to negotiate with the Dey for the release of British subjects.

By favour, the market price of the slaves was accepted by the Algerine potentate, and at this time two hundred and forty-four men, women, and children were redeemed and sent home, leaving another five hundred yet to be ransomed. The women, of whom there were a good many, seem to have been accounted the most valuable, since they and the children cost on an average £50 a head. Next to

them came the skilled workmen, carpenters, and navigators, together with the *chirurgiens*, who were redeemed at £38 each.

In all these negotiations for ransom, the Jews of Algiers had a hand as intermediaries, and managed, we are constantly informed, "to cheat both sides." But there seemed to be no way of dispensing with their dishonest services.

In 1655 Admiral Blake, after destroying the pirate fleet, demanded and obtained at a certain fixed price the release of every British subject in slavery in Algiers, but the prestige thus acquired by the English name does not appear to have been of long avail.

On the restoration of Charles II., a petition was presented to Parliament, concerning the "lamentable condition of one thousand five hundred British subjects, at this time suffering and undergoing most miserable slavery in the piratical city of Algiers," with a moving relation of the cruelties endured by them, accompanied by a prayer for the revival of an old tax, formerly applied to the purpose of redeeming such unfortunate persons. In 1661 Lord Sandwich being sent by Charles II., to bring the Queen from Portugal, was, at the same time, directed to settle the disputes with Algiers. In this he was not successful, for Pepys in his "Diary" observes—

"The business of Algiers hath of late troubled me, because my lord hath not done what he went for, though he did as much as any man in the world could have done."

And later he mentions, that in 1662 letters came from "my lord"—

"That by a great storm and tempest the whole of Algiers is broken

down, and many of their ships sunk into the Mole, so that God Almighty hath ended that unlucky business for us, which is very good news."

Pepys also tells us how he went to the Fleece Tavern to drink, and did remain till four o'clock hearing stories of Algiers, and the manner of life of slaves there, and how certain gentlemen—one of them father of the Archbishop of York—who had been slaves—

"Did make him fully acquainted with their condition, how they did eat nothing but bread and water, and how they were beat upon the soles of their feet and their bellies, at the liberty of their patron."

During the next few years continual outbreaks occurred between the English and Algerian Governments, in the course of which many thousands of British subjects were taken as slaves by the pirate cruisers, with little hope of redemption.

In April, 1682, peace was at length made, and a treaty signed by Charles II., perhaps as disgraceful to English liberties as any ever concluded by Great Britain. In the treaty was a clause that—

"The King of Great Britain shall not be obliged to redeem any of his subjects now in slavery, but it shall depend absolutely upon his Majesty or the friends or the relations of the said persons in slavery, to redeem such as shall be thought fit, agreeing to as reasonable a price as may be with their patrons or masters, for their redemption, *without obliging the said patrons against their will to set any at liberty*."

This treaty, which recognised the slavery of British subjects without even the power of redemption, was renewed by James II. in 1686, and even by George II. in 1729. The only power which at this time made any stand against the tyranny and rapacity of the Barbary States was France.

In 1662 and 1663 Algiers was bombarded and set on fire by the French admiral Du Quesne, in revenge for which Mezzo Morto, the Dey and a renegade, caused the consul and twenty other Frenchmen to be blown away from a great gun on the Mole, their remains being scattered over the decks of the French ships. The gun which was the instrument of this horrible revenge is now at Brest, on the Place d'Armes. After doing in his turn as much damage as he could to the town and shipping, Du Quesne was forced to retire, and a peace was subsequently concluded.

In 1688 the town was again bombarded by the French under the Duc d'Estrées, and at this time the consul and forty Frenchmen were in the same way blown from the cannon's mouth. During the next hundred years Algiers was constantly at war with one European state and another, and in spite of continual internal dissensions, and consequent perpetual changes of Government, in spite of earthquakes and constant ravages of plague—which in one year (1702) is said to have destroyed upwards of forty thousand persons in the city of Algiers alone—the pretensions and the successes of the Algerine arms continued, and one after another the great Powers of Christendom were led to conclude the most humiliating terms of peace with their Barbarian opponents, Venice, Spain, Holland, Portugal, Denmark, Naples, and the United States becoming actually tributary, while the capture of Christian slaves went on with unabated vigour.

Great Britain at length had the glory of putting an end to an outrage under which Europe had groaned for centuries.

As soon as the termination of the Continental war allowed

leisure to attend to this long-desired object, a squadron was sent to Algiers under Lord Exmouth, who was instructed to require, that all the European captives in the Algerine territory should be given up under payment of a fixed sum, and that this nefarious system should be abolished. The Algerines in presence of the English fleet agreed to these terms, but hardly had Lord Exmouth set sail, before the treaty was violated in the most open manner, by the massacre of a large body of Neapolitan coral-fishers at Bone. The British Government, exasperated at this fresh outrage, determined to inflict a severe chastisement on the pirates, and to put an end for ever to the disgraceful traffic in Christian flesh and blood.

On the 27th of August, 1816, Lord Exmouth, with a fleet of five ships of the line, three large and two small frigates, four bomb-ships, and five gun-brigs, arrived before Algiers. He was accompanied by a Dutch squadron of five frigates and a corvette, which he had encountered unexpectedly at Gibraltar. A flag of truce was sent on shore to demand from the Dey, reparation for the late infringement of the treaty, and the surrender of the whole of the Christian slaves in Algiers without ransom or condition, as well as the release of the English consul, who on the appearance of the fleet had been put in irons. Two hours were given for an answer to this demand.

None being received, the English fleet bore up, each vessel proceeding to take its appointed station in front of, and very near to, a most formidable range of double batteries. Indeed, the whole harbour was at this time one great fortress bristling with artillery, and the attack of the fleet was one of the most daring to be found in our naval

history. The flag-ship *Queen Charlotte* was anchored not fifty yards from the Mole head; so near, indeed, that the faces of the people crowding the Mole as mere spectators could be seen. When a shot was fired from the harbour battery at the admiral's ship, and the *Queen Charlotte* was preparing to reply, Lord Exmouth frantically waved his hat to warn the foolhardy sight-seers from the Mole; but the signal not being understood or attended to, the first broadside, we are told, "swept off hundreds of them."

"Then commenced as animated and well-supported a fire as I believe was ever witnessed, from a quarter to three till nine in the evening, and not altogether ceasing till half-past eleven at night."—*Lord Exmouth's Despatch.*

The flotilla of mortar, gun, and rocket-boats was ably conducted, and by means of it, all the ships in the port were set on fire, which spread rapidly over the whole arsenal and storehouses. "The burning of the enemy's ships so near the British fleet, occasioned," says Lord Exmouth, "several anxious moments," but in the end the Algerine batteries were effectually silenced, the whole, according to the official despatch, being accomplished with the most perfect dignity and silence. "Such a thing as a cheer I never heard on any part of the line," writes the admiral; "and that the guns were well directed will be seen for many years to come, and remembered by these Barbarians for ever." In the English fleet were one hundred and twenty-eight killed, and six hundred and ninety wounded. The next morning the Dey accepted the conditions previously imposed by the British admiral, viz. the surrender of all Christian slaves and the cessation of Christian slavery, the refunding of all the money paid by the

Italian Governments of Naples and Sardinia, for the redemption of their slaves during the current year, and reparation and public apology to the British consul.

These demands being complied with, Lord Exmouth was preparing to sail away, when he was informed that two Spaniards were still retained by the Dey on the pretence that they were prisoners for debt. He at once prepared to renew the attack on Algiers. Alarmed by the threat, the Dey surrendered the two men, and thus Lord Exmouth had the satisfaction of declaring, that he left in Algiers no Christian soul in captivity.

The following are the terms of the treaty, which was obtained from the Algerine Government by means of Lord Exmouth's vigorous persuasions:—

"In consideration of the deep interest manifested by H.R.H. the Prince Regent of England for the termination of Christian slavery, his Highness the Dey of Algiers, in token of his sincere desire to maintain inviolable his friendly relations with Great Britain, and to manifest his amicable disposition and high respect towards the Powers of Europe, declares that, in the event of future wars with any European Power, not any of the prisoners shall be consigned to slavery, but treated with all humanity as prisoners of war until regularly exchanged, according to European practice in like cases, and at the termination of hostilities they shall be restored to their respective countries without ransom; and the practice of condemning Christian prisoners of war to slavery is hereby formally and for ever renounced.

"Done in duplicate, in the warlike city of Algiers, in the presence of Almighty God, the 28th day of August in the year of Jesus Christ, 1816, and in the year of the Hegira 1231, and the 6th day of the moon Shawal."

Mr. Shaler, American consul in Algiers at this time, has these "minutes" of the battle, as recorded from his own house in the city:—

"On the morning of the 27th of August, 1816, the weather

being remarkably fine and temperate, the atmosphere only slightly agitated by the breath of zephyrs scarcely perceptible, the whole western horizon, as seen from this house, is covered with vessels of war of various classes and sizes, from the terrible three-decker, down to the insignificant gunboat. The proximity of this fleet was announced last evening by alarm guns, and they appear to be approaching under the influence of a current. At eleven o'clock the breeze freshens a little, and a frigate is detached from the fleet, stands near in with the marine batteries under a flag of truce, and sends a boat on shore. This frigate maintains her position, with a flag of truce flying, until about one o'clock. In the meantime the fleet concentrates in the bay in apparent readiness for action. On the flag being hauled down on board of the frigate, many signals are seen flying in the fleet, and six frigates under the Dutch flag are formed in a separate close line of battle ahead. A French corvette that was lying in the bay, on the appearance of the combined fleets this morning, left her anchorage and stretched out amongst them. At forty-five minutes past one, four bomb vessels take their positions opposite the city, at distances hardly exceeding a mile from the principal marine batteries. At a quarter-past two, many signals are seen flying, and the manœuvres of the fleet indicate the intention of taking positions of attack. At half-past two P.M., the British admiral in the *Queen Charlotte*, of one hundred and twenty guns, fills away with a moderate breeze from the north, and leads in, in majestic style, followed by two ships of seventy-four, one of ninety-eight, and another of seventy-four guns; the frigates stand in promiscuously, with the apparent intention of taking allotted stations, and the Dutch squadron follows in regular line of battle. A few minutes before three the British admiral passes out of sight of this position, and to appearance almost brushing the formidable line of marine batteries with his yards. At this moment two seventy-four gun-ships take their positions at distances apparently not beyond pistol-shot, and at the same time the *Impregnable*, of ninety-eight guns, with a rear-admiral's flag, though at much greater distance; obviously an error. At this time the fleet has passed out of sight of this position, except the three last mentioned and several sloops and small craft, which keep manœuvring under sail, without apparent intention to anchor. At exactly three o'clock a gun is fired by the Algerines upon the British admiral, and the battle instantly becomes general. At twenty minutes past three the fire of the marine batteries appears to be silenced, and hundreds of fugitives from them are seen flying along the seashore, under the walls of this house, where many of them are mowed down by the fire of the *Impregnable*. The cannonade endures with great fury on the part of

the British, and is returned with constancy from the batteries in this quarter. At five o'clock the fire of the marine batteries is renewed, and continued at intervals. At half-past seven the shipping in the port is discovered to be on fire. At eight o'clock the consul is informed that the British consul has been taken from his house by an armed band, and confined in heavy chains in the common prison for criminals. At half-past eight the cannonade endures. The upper part of this house is apparently in ruins; five shells have burst within its walls. At nine the fire begins to slacken on both sides. At eleven the growling of cannon is only heard at long intervals. At midnight, from the terrace of this house, everything in the port appears to be in flames, and two wrecks on fire are drifting out. The spectacle at this moment is peculiarly grand and sublime. A black thunderstorm is rising, probably an effect of the long cannonade; its vivid lightning discovers the hostile fleets retiring with the land breeze, and paints them in strong relief on the deep obscurity of the horizon. Shells and rockets occasionally streaming across the horizon, and discharges of cannon from ships still within reach, proclaim an enemy fatigued, exhausted, but not vanquished; while the Algerines, by discharges of cannon at intervals from a line of batteries more than three miles in extent, lay claim to the same honours.

"The morning of the 28th discovers that the Algerines are unable to make any further resistance, while the combined fleets appear to be in a state to renew the battle. In the course of the day the former acknowledge themselves vanquished, by accepting the humiliating terms of peace offered to them by the victors."

CHAPTER VII.

THE FRENCH IN ALGIERS.

"Alger, ton rôle est beau si tu sais le savoir."

THE following are the dates of the Deys who ruled in Algiers during the early part of this century, two or three only being omitted from the list, whose reign lasted only a few weeks. They were all assassinated with the exception of Ali Khodja, who died of the plague, and Hussein, deposed and exiled by the French :—

1799	Mustapha.
1805	Ahmed.
1809	Hadji Ali.
1815	Omar.
1817	Ali Khodja.
1818 to 1830 . .	Hussein.

The signal chastisement inflicted by Lord Exmouth on Algiers, though it had one grand result—viz. that Christian slavery as an acknowledged institution, was for ever put an end to—by no means fulfilled all the hopes which Europe had based upon it.

Reduced almost to a state of ruin by the destruction of their capital, and by the confiscation of their chief source of revenue, the Algerine pirates lost no time in showing

that their late defeat had by no means deprived them of their ancient spirit or audacity.

The Dey Omar made a moving appeal to his co-religionists, the Sultans of Turkey and Morocco, which was warmly responded to; and though the unfortunate Dey paid in his own person the penalty of his defeat, before the year was out not only was Algiers rebuilt, but the Algerine fleet was once more sweeping the seas, threatening the commerce of the world, and ravaging as of old, the coasts of Spain and Italy. At the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, in 1818, the means were discussed of putting an end to this disgraceful state of affairs. The plenipotentiaries of England and France were asked, that their Governments should make a formal protest to the Barbary States on the subject, to "warn them that the certain effect of their persistence in systematic hostility to pacific commerce, would be to draw upon them a league of all European States, on the consequences of which it would be well for the Barbary States to reflect in time."

At this time Sweden, Holland, Spain and Sicily were all under tribute to the Dey of Algiers, and even France consented to pay a large sum of money as the price of peace.

The way of it was this: the exclusive right to the coral fisheries had been obtained by the French, in consideration of an annual tribute of 17,000 francs. Suddenly the Dey demanded 200,000, which being agreed to, he immediately gave leave to other nations to fish on the French coral grounds. The French consul protesting, was ordered to quit Algiers, and only allowed to remain on payment of a sum of 100,000 francs.

In June, 1824, a rupture occurred between Great Britain

and Algiers, on the subject of an unwarrantable outrage committed on the English consul, Mr. MacDonell. Algiers was blockaded, and a slight engagement took place. Terms were then agreed to, but the English could scarcely be said to have been masters of the situation, since the conditions demanded by the Dey were granted—viz. that the obnoxious consul should not return to Algiers, and that the English flag should not be hoisted on the consulate.

The pretensions and insolence of the Algerines now knew no bounds. They had defied with impunity the only nation whose name they held in dread, and they believed themselves once more, masters of the world.

The events which actually led to the French expedition were briefly as follows :—

During the years of scarcity in France, from 1793—98, corn to the value of 15,000,000 francs had been exported from Algiers. Part of the debt, owing to the disturbed state of affairs which had existed in France, remained unpaid in 1827. A settlement was now agreed upon, the creditors being two Algerine Jews, named Bacri and Bousnach.

But the Dey, after a fashion common to Eastern potentates, constituted himself Bacri's creditor, and claimed that the money should find its way into the state treasury. In the course of the intricate disputes arising out of this matter, the Dey, at one of the state audiences, so far allowed anger to get the better of his judgment, that he struck the French consul, M. Duval, a blow in the face with his fan.

"It is not to me, but to the King of France, that this affront is offered," said the Frenchman with dignity.

"No matter," returned the incensed Dey; "I care no more for your master than I do for you."

This direct insult to the national representative could not be overlooked. M. Duval at once quitted the Dey's court; but the Dey not only refused to offer any apology or explanation of his conduct, but protested loudly that he was the person aggrieved—that his right and just dues had been withheld from him, and that the letters which he had addressed to the French King had remained unanswered.

The French fleet in the Mediterranean attempted to blockade Algiers. The attempt was very ineffectual. Storms were constantly scattering the vessels; two, the *Silène* and the *Aventure*, were wrecked on the coast and their crews murdered; while Algiers, drawing its supplies from the interior or from other coast-towns, could afford to laugh at so inefficient an exhibition of European power. At length a special ambassador was sent over from France to try and arrange matters, but French diplomacy was no match for Turkish indifference. The Pasha would enter into no negotiations, unless he were reimbursed for the damage done to his city by the blockade, and M. de la Bretonnière left without any result having been obtained. As his ship sailed out of the harbour, without any warning or declaration of war, all the guns of the port opened fire upon him.

This last outrage filled up the measure of Algerine insolence, and an expedition for the punishment of the "Barbarians" was organized. "Algiers," says a French writer, "perished by her own fault. The audacity which had stood her in good stead during three centuries, ceased to be *luck* and became madness."

At the end of May, 1830, a French army of thirty-four thousand men, under the command of General de Bourmont, sailed from Toulon amid the loud huzzas of vast crowds of people.

But the war, says M. A. Fillias, was not popular in France. It pleased the King, recalling to his religious spirit the crusades of former ages; but these were the last days of Charles X., and the voice of the country was not with him. M. de Polignac, the minister, was unpopular; and the expedition was generally believed to be, only an attempt to regain lost favour, by an appeal to the national love of fighting—a bauble held before the eyes of the army, to distract their attention from home matters.

However that might have been, the expedition set sail amid the good wishes, it is said, of all the European Powers with the exception of England, "whose natural stiff-backedness and jealousy, made her protest loudly against others doing what she had failed to accomplish!"

In the expedition, however, sailing now as a volunteer, was an old officer of Lord Exmouth's fleet, whose presence and enthusiasm in the cause were, we are told, considered signs of good luck for the new undertaking—a circumstance which says a good deal for the prestige of an old English salt.

It was not until the 13th of June, that the French army finally decided upon a landing-place on the African coast, the peninsula of Sidi Ferruch, twelve miles west of Algiers, being selected. The landing of the troops was quickly and successfully accomplished, the Algerines offering scarcely any resistance.

The Dey having at last roused himself from his apathy,

despatched an army of fifty thousand men to meet the French invader. On the 19th was fought the battle of Staouëli, and on the 24th that of Sidi Khalef, from the name of a small koubba, or saint's tomb, about which the fight raged hotly. In both these battles the forces of Hussein Dey were defeated, and after the last, the whole army retreated precipitately towards Algiers. The Turks, it is said, now loudly demanded the disgrace of the ruler, whose avarice and want of self-control had caused the war; but Hussein, in his fortress of the Kasba, reproaching in his turn the officers of his army for permitting themselves to be defeated by "a horde of infidels," threatened to turn the guns of his stronghold on the city at the first sign of disturbance, and ordered that the holy war should be proclaimed from every minaret throughout the country.

Meantime the French were occupying themselves in making roads and disembarking stores.

It was not until the 3rd of July, that they actually advanced upon the capital, establishing themselves upon the heights which overlook the city, and laying siege to the Fort de l'Empereur. The fortress was well defended, the Turkish troops again showing themselves to be valiant soldiers; but the French fire was overwhelming, and at last the Turks were forced to retire from the fortress, blowing up the powder magazine as they did so. The French then took possession of the ruined citadel, and establishing themselves in another ruined fortress close by, the Fort des Étoiles, or Tagarins, pointed their guns upon the Kasba.

The Dey now sent his private secretary, Sidi Mustapha, to treat with the invaders.

"The Pasha," said the envoy, "acknowledged that God had shown himself on the side of the French, and that when Algiers quarrelled with the mighty Sultan of France, it would be better to make peace before the sun went down; that the Pasha, in spite of his poverty, was willing to forego his claims on the French Government, and even to pay an indemnity for the war, on condition of the French army at once retiring from the country."

These terms M. de Bourmont declines, advising the Dey that, as Algiers is now actually in his power, it will be well for him to surrender at discretion in order to prevent further bloodshed.

The janissaries at the same time send an envoy to the French general, declaring, that the Dey's life being forfeited by his misconduct, they, the Turkish troops, are willing to depose and put him to death, and to elect in his place a new Dey, who "will in all things consider the will of the great French Sultan."

M. de Bourmont dismisses the janissaries' envoy with the reply, that "the French army has not come so far to assassinate an individual, but to conquer an enemy."

Two hours later a deputation of Arabs waits on General de Bourmont, to know what are the terms which a surrender will obtain.

The following are then drawn out :—

1. That Algiers, with the Kasba and all the fortresses, be surrendered at ten o'clock the following morning.

2. That the religion and customs of the inhabitants be respected, and that no French soldier may enter a mosque.

3. The Dey and all the Turks to quit Algiers immediately, their private property being secured to them.

After a stormy sitting of the Divan these conditions are at length accepted, with the additional clause, that the lives and property of the inhabitants be untouched and their women respected.

The Dey only stipulates for two hours' grace, which is granted, and at noon on the 5th of July, the French troops march into Algiers through silent and deserted streets, scarcely any of the inhabitants caring or daring to show themselves, and the historic white flag of the Bourbons floats from the battlements of the old pirate stronghold—

"Within, a palace, and without, a fort."

The loss of life to the French, from their landing up to the taking of the city, had been comparatively trifling. One touching incident of the invasion is recorded. "Only one officer of high rank," wrote M. de Bourmont in his despatches home, "has been dangerously wounded. He is the second of my four sons who have followed me to Africa; but I trust that he will yet live, faithfully to serve his King and country."

The hope was fallacious, and the glory of the victor's triumph was dimmed by the grief of a bereaved father.

An enormous quantity of treasure, great part of which was stored away in the vaults beneath the Kasba, fell into the hands of the French, the amount of which was computed at upwards of two millions sterling, being nearly double the cost of the war.

Hussein Dey and his family, among whom were fifty-five women, embarked on the 10th of July for Naples, his request to withdraw to Malta having been denied him.

In an interview which he had before his departure with General de Bourmont, he is said to have warned the French against the treachery of the tributary beys.

Hussein Dey is described as a fine-looking man, sixty years of age, wearing a flowing white beard, and of remarkably dignified manners. His moral character was somewhat better than that of his predecessors, though he is accused of certain acts which savour of tyranny; such for instance, as causing one of his ministers whose power he dreaded, to be strangled as he sat playing draughts with him, and also of putting some of his own family to death for the same reason.

He finally retired to Egypt, where he was well received by Mahomet Ali, and where he died.

The day after his departure from Algiers, the janissaries, to the number of two thousand five hundred, were despatched to Smyrna, those who were married being permitted to remain in the country.

No sooner had the French entered Algiers than the Beys of Oran, Bona, Tittery, Tripoli and Tunis hastened to make their submission; the chiefs of various Arab tribes sent in messages of welcome to their deliverers from Turkish oppression, and assurances of allegiance and friendship. It seemed as though the French conquest of Algiers was to be a work of no difficulty whatever.

"The task of the army is fulfilled," wrote General de Bourmont, in a glow of exultation.

A check was, however, soon to follow.

On the 23rd of July, Bourmont, with twelve hundred foot, a hundred horse, and two pieces of cannon, marched on the road to Blidah, which he had been strongly advised by

the Bey of Tittery to occupy, as a measure of creating confidence, and securing the allegiance of the tribes.

At Blidah the French were received with enthusiasm. Scenes of fraternisation ensued. Thus thrown off their guard, they were attacked on the following day by a force of ten thousand Arabs, who almost succeeded in cutting off the retreat of the tiny army, on its breathless flight back to Algiers.

This expedition had a most unfortunate effect so far as the French were concerned, since it deprived them of the high prestige their arms had acquired, and awoke among the natives a hope of absolutely driving them from the country.

On his return from Blidah, M. de Bourmont found the bâton and brevet of a marshal of France awaiting him. The honour came at an unfortunate moment. He was occupied in organizing a new expedition across the Metidja, when news reached Algiers of the Revolution of July and the deposition of Charles X.

The blow fell as a thunderbolt upon the troops, who had just conquered a new realm in the King's name.

An exciting scene took place at the Kasba, where M. de Bourmont gathered his staff about him, where oaths of eternal fidelity to the legitimate sovereign were sworn over drawn swords, and where the project was seriously discussed of abandoning Africa to its fate, and marching the whole army back to Paris, to restore the King to his own. At length the agitation calmed down, the army, caring little for politics, declared its intention of abiding by the will of the nation, and eventually the tri-color took the place of the white flag, under which Algiers had been conquered.

M. de Bourmont was at once superseded in his com-

mand. On the 2nd of September the new governor arrived, and the victor of Algiers left the scene of his conquests of two months since, a fugitive—*proscrit.*

General Clauzel was received with acclamations by the army. He had served both under the Republic and the Empire, was known to be brave, and believed to be a man of ability. Proscribed and exiled during the Restoration, he rose again by the fresh turn of Fortune's wheel. He at once organized an attack on Blidah. The Bey of Tittery, who had now openly declared war against the French, was pronounced to be deposed, and Clauzel marched out to meet him.

Blidah fell at once, in spite of a stout resistance, and Clauzel, leaving two battalions of infantry in that place, marched on to Medeah, the chief town of Tittery. To reach this, a narrow defile through the mountains had to be passed. Every rock and stone, every inch of ground, was hotly contested by the Arabs, but before reaching Medeah a deputation of the inhabitants made submission.

General Clauzel, leaving a garrison in this town, returned to Blidah, where he found the streets flowing with blood and strewn with corpses. Since his departure a vigorous attack had been made on the two French battalions by the Arabs, and a sanguinary battle of ten hours had ensued, in which the small French force was almost cut to pieces.

The whole French army retired upon Algiers. General Clauzel, whose independent administration had given offence to the home Government, was shortly after this recalled, and succeeded by General Berthezène, a man of good intentions, able as an administrator, but utterly incapable as a general.

The policy of the French Government at this time tended towards retrenchment in Africa. Every year the army in Algeria was reduced. General Clauzel had created two native regiments, under the name of battalions of Zouaves, to supply the places of French regiments recalled home. Now, a further diminution left the whole force in Algeria at ten thousand men.

Meantime a general insurrection of the natives threatened, and every expedition undertaken by Berthezène proved disastrous. The next general appointed to the army of Algiers, was the Duc de Rovigo, who had been general of division and minister of police under the first Napoleon, while at the same time a new authority was created, in the person of M. Pichon, as administrator of civil affairs.

The united, or rather disunited rule of these two men, was as disastrous in every way to the new province as it could well be.

The Duc de Rovigo was essentially a soldier, a man of sanguinary and ferocious character, irritated into still further exercise of his arbitrary power, by the control which his colleague or rival attempted to exercise over him.

The late administration had left all in confusion—the country was in open insurrection. M. Pichon would have conciliated and appeased; the Duc de Rovigo was determined to conquer and punish.

Not only did he ravish the country with fire and sword, impose impossible fines upon offending towns and villages, and in default sack them, but his career is also stained with the treacherous execution of the two Arab chieftains Mecaoud and El-Arbi, who, confiding in the word of a French general, allowed themselves to fall into his power,

and were instantly arrested and, without trial, put to death.

In the meantime General Boyer, in the province of Oran, by his ill-timed severities and unjust administration, was equally arousing the indignation of the Arabs, who protested with a show of truth, that the French were "worse than the Turks."

There now appears upon the scene one of the most remarkable characters that the nineteenth century—perhaps we may, without exaggeration, say the modern world—has produced—Abd-el-Kader. The career of this man, as full of adventure as that of any knight-errant of romance, forms so complete and thrilling a chapter of African history, that it merits being told continuously, and we will therefore in the following pages, consider rather the internal than the external conditions of the French-African province.

The Duc de Rovigo, whose ill-health at last obliged him to retire from his command, was succeeded by General Avizard, whose chief merit is in having established what is known as the *bureau arabe*, for the regulation of all matters having connection with the native population. One of these bureaux is attached to every command, the officers of which perform the same functions towards the native tribes, as the prefects do for the French—such as the collection of taxes, the administration of communes, &c. It is also their duty to keep peace between one tribe and another, to settle disputes, hear appeals, control the Arab chiefs in the exercise of their authority, and at the same time, keep the chief of their own department thoroughly *au fait* of the sentiments and political views of the natives within their own districts, for whose peaceable behaviour they are in a

measure responsible. To this general (1833) succeeded General Voirol, who chiefly distinguished himself as a road-maker.

At this time the question of the colonization of Algeria became a very agitated one in France.

The conquest had been brilliant, but the trouble and expense of maintaining the new province had been very great. Moreover, the conquest itself had been the legacy of the Legitimists; it was they who pointed to Algeria as a thing of their own creation—their pride and glory; and it was therefore little likely to become the pet child of the new administration. It was rather their *rôle* to represent it as an encumbrance—a white elephant, equally difficult to dispose of or provide for. And in truth, regarded as a colony, the first years of the French occupation of Algeria had not proved a great success. At the beginning, everything seemed to promise for France a new field of industry and wealth. No sooner had the swords of the army cleared the way, than a loud outcry was raised for colonists—the charms and advantages of the new El-Dorado were vehemently insisted on.

To the appeal a considerable number of Swiss, Germans, Maltese, and also some French, responded.

The conquest of the new land, its comparative proximity to France, seemed suddenly to awaken in French minds a hitherto undeveloped passion for colonization. With the national impetuosity, they threw themselves headlong into the new idea, buoyed up by the most extravagant notions of sudden fortune and certain success—it was the newest fashion, the latest *chic*.

The results were terribly disappointing. Fever and want

decimated the emigrants, who were for the most part ignorant of everything they should have known, and wanting both in capital and perseverance, the two essentials to successful colonization ; added to which they found in this new land security neither for life nor property.

Violent and yet feeble, because changeable policy, governed the country. Arbitrary legislation had alienated the Moors of the town, cruel reprisals had irritated the tribes of the plains and mountains—"disgust on the one side, discouragement on the other, defiance everywhere." This was the position of Algiers as described by M. le Baron Mounier.

It began to be a question whether Algiers should be retained by France or not.

A commission of inquiry was appointed on the matter, as to which M. de la Pinsonnière reported :—

"There has been confusion in the organization of matters, confusion in the jurisdiction, confusion in the administration—confusion everywhere, and injustice both to the colonists and natives. With regard to these last, we have killed on mere suspicion and without trial, persons whose guilt has been more than doubtful; we have confiscated the property of their heirs; we have massacred the bearers of our safe-conducts, slaughtered whole populations for crimes of which we have afterwards found they were not guilty; have tried at our tribunals men reputed saints and held in veneration of their people, for the offence of pleading the cause of their unfortunate countrymen—judges have been found to condemn them, and civilized men to execute them; we have thrown chiefs of tribes into prison because our deserters have taken refuge among them; we have dignified acts of treason by the name of policy, and qualified as diplomatists those whom we should have scouted as odious spies. In fact, we have exceeded in barbarism the barbarians we came to civilize, and then we complain that we have not succeeded in our relations with them."

The case of the colonist, according to the report, was

not much better than that of the native. Not only was he subjected to imposture in the purchase of his lands, to which matter the Algerian Jews lent themselves very readily, effectually cheating both native and European; not only was he exposed to a climate which more often than not proved fatal to him; not only was he under constant terror of attack from the Arabs—attack, which oftenest took the destructive form of incendiary fires—but he suffered continually from the lawless rapacity of his own countrymen.

"The soldier of conquest," writes M. de la Pinsonnière, "always has considered and ever will consider himself absolute master of the conquered country, and in spite of the anxiety of the chiefs of an army to maintain discipline, the neighbourhood of a camp must always be disastrous to a colonist. Caring little for a future which he does not understand and which does not interest him, the soldier can only show his power in destroying and ruining. His hatchet hews down plantations that time and barbarism have respected, fruit-trees and vines are requisitioned to feed his camp fires, doors and window-frames of houses chopped up for the same purpose. The unfortunate colonist suffers in every way. Inexperience, disease, poverty and rapine alike combine to ruin him; discouragement follows on discouragement; every year he sows less and reaps less; if we do not take care he will come to an end altogether."

Such, according to official reports, was colonization during the first years of French occupation in Algeria.

The experiment had been tried, and had failed signally. Dr. Bodichon, the well-known Algerian physician, says—

"The French have no taste for colonization. Those who come here for the most part have but one thought—to make as much money in as short a space of time as is possible, in order that they may escape back again to France."—*Considérations sur l'Algérie.*

The Frenchman is not by nature a cosmopolitan—not like the Englishman, born to rove! France is his world,

and while even a strip of blue sea separates him from his native land, he is not at his ease. Algeria, even with the French flag waving over it, and the French café established on its soil, cannot be to him as France—the land of his love.

Moreover, between the Frenchman and the Arab there is as it were "a great gulf fixed." M. Fromentin writes—

"There are moral as well as chemical antipathies, and political economy will never succeed in changing the law of natural repulsion into love."

The modes of life and habits of thought of the two peoples are antagonistic; all that the Arab reverences the Frenchman scorns, all that the Frenchman delights in, the Arab loathes. Again to quote M. Fromentin :—

"For us to live is to change, for the Arab to exist, is to continue. Is not this difference between the two characters sufficient to prevent them from understanding one another? For the rest, the Arabs, our neighbours, at least those who belong to us, ask of us very little; unhappily that little we are unable to grant them. They ask only to be let alone, not to be watched, cared for, or constrained; to do that which their fathers did before them; to possess their lands without title-deeds, to build without having their streets straightened, to move from place to place without passport, to be born without being registered, to grow up without being vaccinated, to die without the formality of inquiry. As an indemnity for the ills which civilization has brought upon them, they contest their right to be poor and naked, to beg at the gates, to leave their fields uncultivated, to despise the soil of which they have been dispossessed, and to quit a country which has not protected them from conquest. Those who have money hide it; those who have none hug their misery; and of all the rights which they have lost, value none so highly as the right of being undisturbed, and of resigning themselves helplessly to fate."—*Une Année dans le Sahel.*

The difficulties which attended the French settlement in Africa were undoubtedly very great—all the greater since

it was almost their first effort at colonization; all the greater that the unsettled state of the mother-country failed to set the example of steady tranquillity, or to provide the African province with a firm and even government.

A ball of contention and reproach between rival factions at Paris, Algeria was flung from one extreme to the other; now committed to a policy of retrenchment and conciliation, now crowded with troops and urged to do "great deeds." While M. Thiers, the historian of the Revolution, was warmly advocating in the Chamber, war *à outrance* against the perfidious Arabs, a policy known at that time as the *système agité*, M. Guizot, the historian of civilization, was loudly pleading the cause of moderation and native government.

To the ferocious martial law of the Duc de Rovigo, succeeded in 1834, the feeble and indecisive government of the kindly but incapable D'Erlon.

Just at the time when discontent was rife throughout the country, and a general insurrection threatened, the foreign legion was despatched to Spain, and various other regiments recalled to France.

Clauzel, who in August 1835, succeeded M. d'Erlon, in vain pleaded for reinforcements. After a brilliant campaign, in which he had subdued the Hadjoutes; at the head of five thousand men scoured the country about Algiers as far as the Tombeau de la Chrétienne; and successfully occupied Mascara, the head-quarters of Abd-el-Kader; instead of more troops being sent him, other regiments were ordered home; but when he failed in his attempt on Constantine, by reason of his insufficient army, he was disgraced from his command.

The next governor, General Damrémont, succeeded at the head of ten thousand troops, in covering the disaster of his predecessor, and gained Constantine for the French, though at the cost of his own life.

During the rule of his successor, Marshal Valée (1837—40), the colony enjoyed a little peace, new roads were constructed, and new regulations for the better administration of justice put in force.

Algiers was at this time made the seat of a bishopric, "for," said the French, in the petition which they presented on the subject, "the Arabs reproach us that we have no religion—that we are Christians, but do not fulfil the duties of such, and, according to them, a man is no man who does not pray."

In 1838 Marshal Valée occupied Blidah and Koleah.

In October, 1839, the passage by the French of the mountain pass, Portes-de-fer, contrary to the spirit of the treaty they had made with Abd-el-Kader, led to the proclamation of the "Holy War" by that chieftain, and to a long and sanguinary struggle.

CHAPTER VIII.

ABD-EL-KADER.

"Sans peur et sans reproche."

ABD-EL-KADER, whose career is the one harmony amid the jarring discords of the French occupation of Algeria, the one shining spot in a dark tale of bloodshed and mutual recrimination, was born in the year 1807, in the plains of Ghris, in the province of Oran. He belonged to a family priding itself on its descent from the Prophet; and he as well as his father, Mehi-ed-deen, was a Marabout, that is to say, member of a kind of aristocratic priesthood, Mehi-ed-deen, the father, being renowned throughout Northern Africa for the piety of his life and for his active charity; and Abd-el-Kader, we are assured, even as a youth, shared the unbounded respect, confidence, and affection which the Arabs of Oran had long extended to his father.

At the age of nineteen he accompanied Mehi-ed-deen on a pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina, and afterwards to Bagdad, to the tomb of Abd-el-Kader-el-Djellali, the patron saint of Algeria, of whom the youthful chief was a namesake. Many stories are told about mysterious indications given to Abd-el-Kader while at Bagdad,

of his future greatness; the angel Gabriel was said to have appeared to his father charged with the message, and declaring that the young man would be raised up as a champion and leader of his people. "And truly," says a French writer frankly enough, "the angel Gabriel, or indeed God Himself, could hardly have made a better choice."

After two years' absence, part of which time they were detained prisoners by the jealousy of the Bey of Oran, Abd-el-Kader and his father returned home, to be received with rejoicings and thanksgivings, and a mighty sacrifice of oxen and sheep.

This was in the year 1828.

The conquest of 1830 at first inspired the Arabs with no great amount of anxiety or distrust. The Turkish yoke, though in truth, they had never thought it worth their while to throw it off, had been galling and oppressive. They were not sorry to see the ruling faction chased from Algiers, nor did the presence of the European on their shores, cause them any special annoyance. Times and again, the Franks had descended upon their coasts, and occupied one or other of their maritime towns, but after awhile the storm had blown over, the unbelievers had retired across the seas, and things had resumed their usual course. Very soon however, the proceedings of the French began to alarm the Arabs as to the future of their country. Not only did these invaders seem inclined to establish themselves on a permanent footing in Algiers, but they almost immediately began to extend their conquests inland. The advance upon Blidah (July 24, 1830) sounded the first note of warning, and the attitude of the Arabs on that occasion (page 123) showed very plainly what their feelings

on the matter were. And this first defeat of the French inspired the natives with confidence in themselves. An enemy once beaten might be beaten again. "They ran away from Blidah," was the boast of the Arab warriors; "soon we will make them glad to run from other places."

Meanwhile, in the province of Oran, affairs were becoming more and more unsettled. The deposition of the Bey reduced the country to a complete state of anarchy. The bad government of the Turks was succeeded by no government at all, and robbery and violence were rampant.

By the orders of Mehi-ed-deen, to whom the tribes all looked up, Abd-el-Kader and his brothers, with effective escorts, scoured the plains in knight-errant fashion, relieving the oppressed, protecting fugitives, and executing vengeance on the common enemies of order.

At the same time a general feeling of indignation against the French was daily gaining ground, fanned not a little by the extortions of which they were guilty, and by the savage policy of General Boyer, Governor of Oran.

To fill up the measure of confusion, the Arab tribes, long united under a common oppression, now began to quarrel among themselves, and were literally as sheep having no shepherd. A head and ruler was felt to be necessary, and after an ineffectual appeal to the Emperor of Morocco, who was afraid of complicating matters with the French, they turned to Mehi-ed-deen, urging him strongly to become their leader and avenger—their elected Sultan.

After considerable hesitation Mehi-ed-deen yielded to the demand made of him. "But if I do so," he said at length, "it is only that I may at once abdicate in favour of my son Abd-el-Kader—he whose courage and prowess you have

already had many opportunities of proving. He will lead you."

For during the spring of 1832, Mehi-ed-deen had already led an army of natives up to the walls of Oran, in the attack on which, the young Abd-el-Kader had specially distinguished himself. The decision of the aged chieftain was received with respect by the Arabs.

On being informed of the choice of the tribes and of his father's command, young Abd-el-Kader replied with unaffected simplicity, "It is my duty to obey," and was at once proclaimed Sultan amid great rejoicings.

That same afternoon, at the Mosque of Mascara, he, as his habit was, after reading and expounding the Koran, addressed the people.

"Not for minutes, but for hours, and until the sun had sunk below the horizon, did the soldier-orator pour forth one continued stream of burning and impassioned eloquence. He expatiated in heartrending tones on the sins, iniquities, and horrors, which polluted the land. In vivid terms he depicted Heaven's judgments overtaking a godless and vice-abandoned people; and now again he conjured up before the minds of his audience, in characters of flame, the appalling picture of their country ravaged by the infidel, their domestic hearths violated, their temples desecrated. But when with outstretched arm and lightning glance he called on his countrymen, in words which glowed with the fire of inspiration, to stand boldly forward in the cause of God and the Prophet, to rally round the standard of the 'Djehad,' and then painted in vivid colours the liberated spirits of the slain entering the blissful mansions, they sprang to their feet, they shook their spears, they clashed their swords, they wept aloud, and with frantic cries yelled out, 'Il Djehad!' 'Il Djehad!'"—*Life of Abd-el-Kader. Col. Churchill.*

The next day Abd-el-Kader was received by an immense concourse outside the walls of Mascara, among whom were ten thousand Arab horsemen, and that same evening he

issued a proclamation, claiming the obedience of his people, and declaring at once his intention of restoring order to the land, and of "driving back and overcoming the enemy" who had invaded it. The declaration was signed, "Defender of Religion and Prince of the Faithful, Abd-el-Kader-ihn-Mehi-ed-deen."

Abd-el-Kader was at this time twenty-four years old. He is described as small of stature, delicate and pale in feature, with eyes of remarkable intelligence and hands like a woman's. He had already won renown as a soldier by his valour, and his extraordinary prowess as a horseman was proverbial, even among Arabs. The jealousy of tribe against tribe prevented the youthful Sultan from being at once acknowledged by the entire population, but his first successful engagement with the French garrison of Oran, though only a skirmish, assured him the allegiance of a vast number of tribes who had hitherto stood aloof. He next attacked Tlemçen and took it, though, in consequence of his having no artillery, he was unable to hold it. A series of engagements followed, in which the fortune of the day was sometimes with one side and sometimes with the other, but the first overtures of peace came from the French, who were severely harassed by the system of blockade which Abd-el-Kader established about their settlements, stopping all supplies from the interior.

On the 4th of February, 1834, a treaty between General Desmichels and "the Sultan" was drawn up, in which the position of Abd-el-Kader was clearly recognised as a sovereign prince, but which contained no recognition on his part, of the sovereignty of France in Africa. The two drafts of the treaty, that held by the French general and that held

by the Arab chief, differed in two or three important items, specially as to one clause in which Abd-el-Kader had stipulated for a monopoly of commerce. The young Emir, however, not suspecting fraud, was well satisfied with his treaty, and had now time to turn his attention to the internal affairs of his kingdom.

He applied himself with earnestness and intelligence to the task of organization. He divided his possessions into certain portions, over which he put officers called Khalifas. These he established at all his chief centres, in Mascara, Tlemçen, Medeah, Milianah, in Kabylia, and the Sahara. The Khalifats were divided into tribes commanded each by an Agha, who was held responsible for its peace and good order. Weekly reports were required as to the number of cattle, beasts of burden, and horses ready for service in each aghalik. A Cadi, paid by the State, was appointed to each tribe to administer justice.

Abd-el-Kader abolished the arbitrary system of taxation which had existed under the Turks, and confined himself to the tithes enjoined by the Koran, which he levied with unfailing strictness, punishing such of the tribes as from time to time refused the tribute, with unyielding severity. With the resources thus obtained he maintained a large standing army, which he caused to be instructed by French non-commissioned officers, and established cannon-foundries, powder-mills, and manufactories of small arms, which were superintended by European artisans—for the present tranquillity was felt to be rather an armed truce, than a lasting peace.

In truth it was not long before hostilities broke out again, the matter of dispute being the protection by the French of

two Arab tribes, who had revolted from Abd-el-Kader's authority.

This, Abd-el-Kader declared to be a violation of the treaty, which had provided that deserters from both sides were to be given up. The French refused to consider the two tribes who preferred their rule to the Emir's, to be deserters.

Abd-el-Kader summoned them somewhat imperiously to give up the tribes or to take the consequences. In reply the Governor of Oran sallied out to attack the Arabs, whom he believed to be in small force. On the contrary, Abd-el-Kader had been rapidly bringing his troops to the front. In the battle which ensued, the French were routed, their retreat cut off, and the whole column literally annihilated. "The defeat of Macta," says a French writer, "was one of the most serious checks sustained by the French arms in Algeria."

Immediately upon this, Marshal Clauzel, the new Governor of Algiers, marched upon Mascara and took it, but was quickly driven out again. He occupied Tlemçen, but was instantly blockaded by the indefatigable Emir. On every side, and without intermission, the French were harassed. In whatever direction they attempted to move, there was the ever-ready Abd-el-Kader waiting to receive them. Shut up in the towns they held, they were reduced to the verge of starvation, by the rigorous blockade which the Emir successfully maintained round each isolated station.

While matters were in this condition, General Bugeaud arrived with reinforcements from France, but urged by the home Government by all means to make peace with this

redoubtable Arab chief, whose hostility seemed to menace the very existence of the French in Algiers. Especially was this course urged by the King, Louis Philippe, who earnestly desired peace, and believed that the best chance of it, lay in alliance and friendly relations with the native princes.

The result of Bugeaud's negotiations was the celebrated treaty of Tafna (May, 1837), which secured to Abd-el-Kader the sovereignty of all Algeria, with the exception of the coast towns and the plain of Metidja. "In addition," says Abd-el-Kader's biographer, Colonel Churchill, "to the immense accession which this splendid triumph had added to his influence and power, he now carried along with him the advantage of appearing before the world, as the friend and ally of France."

As soon as the terms of the treaty were agreed upon, a meeting took place between General Bugeaud and the young Arab, a meeting which has become historical, on occasion of which the triumphant Emir was not backward in asserting the superiority of his position, by making the French commander wait five hours for him at the appointed place of rendezvous. At length he was received by the young Sultan with all the dignity and grace of an Oriental potentate, backed by an army of fifteen thousand cavalry, and attended by an escort of two hundred chiefs, mounted on splendid Arab chargers, "with highly burnished arms that flashed and glittered in the noon-day African sun."

"Abd-el-Kader, whose simple apparel offered a striking contrast to the splendid appointments of his suite, was mounted on a magnificent black charger, which he handled with extraordinary dexterity, sometimes making it spring with all fours in the air, and sometimes making it walk for some yards on its hind legs. Several Arabs ran by his

side, holding his stirrups and the ends of his scarlet burnous."—*Life of Abd-el-Kader.*

The meeting, thanks to the good-nature of the French general, whose *rôle* was that of conciliation, passed off pleasantly enough, and ended with mutual assurances of friendship and fidelity.

There can be no doubt that the terms of the treaty of Tafna were in every respect advantageous to Abd-el-Kader, securing to him as they did, absolute power over at least two-thirds of Algeria, and making the French entirely dependent upon him for supplies. It was altogether so hampering a treaty for them that it could only have been agreed to under pressure of extreme difficulties, or with the reserved intention of breaking it whenever convenient. But the obstacles with which they had at the moment to contend, were sufficient excuse for its being made in all good faith, added to which the unpopularity of the Algerian conquest was at this time so great in France, that not only were troops and supplies most grudgingly granted, but the question was again mooted of abandoning the country altogether.

By the Government, then, the alliance with Abd-el-Kader was rated as a master-stroke of policy.

Abd-el-Kader himself was equally satisfied with the terms which he had exacted.

Once more relieved from external pressure, he was free to devote himself to the work of consolidating his power at home. It was no light task. No sooner was peace concluded with the French, and the immediate danger, as they thought, past, than the jealousy of the tribes awoke, and disaffection and insubordination were rife among those, who

in the hour of danger, had gladly acknowledged the heroic young Emir as their chief. Allegiance was refused here, tribute withheld there.

At the head of nine thousand men faithful to him, Abd-el-Kader marched against the disaffected tribes, conquered them, and, by a well-timed generosity, attached them most effectually to his cause and person. In a few months, not only was his sway acknowledged by the people of the plains and mountains, but the far distant tribes of the Sahara, into the heart of which he led his victorious Spahis, paid tribute to him, and furnished him with the required contingent of men and horses.

He now turned the whole of his attention to the formation of a line of forts, which should, in case of attack from the French, defend the highlands of the lesser Atlas, and also to the building of a new capital and stronghold in the mountains, since the ease with which General Clauzel had obtained possession of Mascara and Tlemçen, had convinced the astute Arab chief of the impossibility of maintaining as places of defence the cities of the plain.

The ruins of an old Roman town, called by the Arabs Tekedemt, or *destroyed*, existed sixty miles south-east of Oran. Here it was that Abd-el-Kader thought to found the chief city of a new empire, for on nothing less than the re-establishment of the old Arab supremacy was his heart fixed.

For the present he was content that the French should occupy the coasts, "for," said he, "I have no ships, and the sea is not mine; but if the French Sultan is king of the sea, I must be king of the land"; but in the visions which

he had of future Arab greatness, we may be sure that the French garrisons of Algiers and Oran found no place.

Meanwhile the building of Tekedemt was carried on with energy. Streets and mosques arose on the old ruins, military stores and manufactories of arms were established, and a mint struck off silver and copper coins, bearing on one side the inscription, "It is the will of God, I have appointed him my agent;" on the other, "Struck at Tekedemt by the Sultan, Abd-el-Kader."

In his other principal towns, manufactories of various kinds were established, under the superintendence of Europeans. A cannon-foundry at Tlemçen, a musket-manufactory and powder-mills at Milianah; mines of iron, sulphur, and saltpetre were worked all over the country; and not only were the exertions of Abd-el-Kader directed to the production of destructive engines, but various peaceful industries were promoted, and, above all, schools established in every centre, colleges in some, and a large library of valuable manuscripts collected by him at Tekedemt.

Altogether the rule of this remarkable man was one of justice, order, and enlightenment, and as such it has been recognised even by his enemies.

"The greatest evil that Abd-el-Kader did us," says M. Pelissier in his "Annales," "was, that he put us in the position of representing brute force, a mere destructive power, while he represented moral force, order, and good government."

But the position in which the French were placed by the treaty of Tafna was for them an absolutely untenable one, and it soon became evident that the conflict of power between them and the Arab "Sultan" must lead to fresh

hostilities, unless they were willing to be driven altogether from the country.

In the same year as the treaty (1837), the French had beseiged and possessed themselves of Constantine. In this matter Abd-el-Kader had not interfered, but the treaty had not provided for the passage of French troops across the country under Abd-el-Kader's jurisdiction, and the march of a French force, from Constantine through Kabylia by the famous pass of the Portes-de-fer (October, 1839), was regarded by the Emir as an infringement of his rights. There can be little doubt that it was so, since the French commander, Marshal Valée, did not hesitate to secure the safety of his column on its passage through the Kabyle country, by displaying a permit sealed with Abd-el-Kader's seal. But the passport was a forgery! It had neither been demanded nor obtained.

Upon this hostilities threatened. The indignation of the Emir, which other infringements of the treaty had been gradually fomenting, was thoroughly roused. A series of letters, penned with remarkable straightforwardness, and touching in their simple earnest appeal for justice, were addressed to the King Louis Philippe and to Marshal Valée by Abd-el-Kader, but he was uncompromising as to his rights, and in the end, war—for which, perhaps, each side was only too eager—was declared.

"Treason has burst upon us from the infidel," wrote Abd-el-Kader to his lieutenant, Ben Salem, and in a few hours after the declaration, the whole country, Kabyle and Arab joining, rose like a wave of the sea, threatening destruction to every outlying European settlement, and carrying fire and sword up to the very gates of Algiers itself.

Once more the standard of the Djehad was waved, the Holy War preached in every hill-side koubba, and the Arab tribes, in their thousands rallying round their intrepid leader at Medeah, swore on the Koran eternal fidelity, through success or disaster, to the sacred cause of country and religion. Determined action was felt to be necessary by the French, and Marshal Valée, concentrating his forces at the camp of Bou-Farik, prepared to attack Medeah.

But to reach this place, the mountains, to be traversed only by narrow and rocky defiles, had to be passed. These defiles had been strengthened and, as he believed, rendered impregnable by Abd-el-Kader. It was here that he had dug, as he said, the grave of the French army.

To the astonishment of the Arabs, the French, instead of defiling through the gorge, came vaulting over the steeps. Ravines, woods, rocks, all were equally mastered by them. They reached the entrenchments, they fought hand to hand with their enemy. Every rock, every stone, every inch of ground was disputed foot by foot; but the French gained, the Arabs yielded, and the passage of the "Col de Mouzaïa," at which the youthful Duc d'Aumale won his spurs, has ever been regarded by the French as one of their most brilliant exploits. They next occupied Milianah, upon which place Abd-el-Kader had retreated, but which he abandoned at their approach.

The French army then marched back to Algiers, leaving garrisons in this place and in Medeah. But, so far from having accomplished its work, its task was but begun. The isolated garrisons of these and other towns were blockaded by the indefatigable Emir; sudden and mysterious movements seemed to render him ubi-

quitous; on all points the Europeans were harassed and decimated, worn out by constant assaults, or caged as in a trap and destroyed by famine.

The French Government was at length roused to the real dangers of the situation.

General Pelet had written but a short time before—

"If we do not take care, Abd-el-Kader will shortly be acknowledged Sultan of the whole kingdom, and we shall have destroyed the Turkish despotism but to raise up an Arab nationality. Who knows the extent of this man's resources among the distant warlike tribes? Who knows that he may not even now be meditating an attack on Algiers itself? To my thinking, it is not a coalition that the Emir is forming: it is a crusade which he is preaching against us, with all the power which his royal and sacerdotal character gives him. It is a terrible enemy that France has raised up against herself, and I believe that only a war *à outrance* can be maintained between him and us. We must repair the mistake of the treaty, and that soon."

These words, written shortly after the signature of the treaty, were now felt to be prophetic, and France acted upon them. War *à outrance* against the Arab chief was declared, and to Bugeaud, by whom the treaty had been made, was deputed the task of hunting down the man with whom he had sworn friendship. Abd-el-Kader hailed the appointment of Bugeaud as governor-general with satisfaction.

But Bugeaud came a second time to Algeria with a stern and well-defined duty before him. The time for temporizing was past, that for action had begun; it was a single combat in which one or other of the combatants must perish. Eighty thousand men were placed under General Bugeaud's command. Taking a lesson from his Arab adversaries, he began an entirely new system of tactics. Instead of massing his men he distributed them in flying columns all

about the country; he dispensed with heavy baggage and ammunition, carrying only a few mountain guns that, taken to pieces, were transported on the backs of mules.

Thus unencumbered, the active French troops could pursue the Arabs into their mountain recesses, or chase them across the trackless desert. The Emir was now (1842) reduced to defend himself. He retired as the French advanced, and the difficulty became, not so much to defeat as to overtake him. It was like chasing a will-o'-the-wisp or the roll of a wave on the ocean.

The French moved through the country, burning, destroying, and devastating, harassed in front and rear, and yet never coming to close quarters with the enemy, suffering extraordinary privations, destroyed by thirst, heat, and fever to such an extent, that at the close of 1842, Bugeaud had to report that of his marching army of sixty thousand men, he had only four thousand fit for active duty, and yet without one "glorious action" to record. They occupied and razed the towns of Tekedemt, Boghar, and other strongholds of the Emir in the desert, finding in each but a few "cocks, hens, and cats," by way of booty—not a living human being—and the houses for the most part in flames. In their march they would probably all have succumbed to hunger, had they not discovered, accidentally, the *Silos*, or underground granaries, of the Arabs, in which many years' harvests were stored, and which they rifled; thus not only providing themselves with bread, but literally cutting away the ground from under their enemies' feet.

Now that the French had thoroughly roused to action, there could be no doubt as to the side on which the final victory would be, however protracted and disastrous the struggle,

But Abd-el-Kader, in no way daunted by the turn which affairs had taken, fought bravely on. Abandoning the towns to the French, he established what was known as the *Smala*, a fortified movable city under canvas, in which were collected a vast amount of treasure and a large number of women and children, among whom were his own mother and wife; for Abd-el-Kader in this, as in all other relations of his life, a knight *pur et sans reproche*, was the husband of one wife only, to whom he had been married at the age of fifteen, and to whom he was tenderly attached.

The smala, with its population of some sixty thousand souls, besides enormous flocks and herds, followed the Sultan's movements, advancing into the more cultivated districts or retreating to the Sahara, according to the fluctuations of his fortunes. It was arranged with military regularity—each *deira*, or household, had its place, and four tribes were specially set apart to watch over and protect it. In the centre was the tent of the Sultan's wife, guarded night and day by thirty negroes.

The sudden attack and rout of this last stronghold by the Duc d'Aumale and a small body of French cavalry, was the most disastrous blow that Abd-el-Kader experienced. The young Duke and his company came upon the encampment by chance. With headlong courage the gallant six hundred dashed into it. Their impetuosity carried everything before it. As it happened the guard was inefficient, the tribes scattered, and the smala only a vast crowd of helpless women, children, and wounded.

"Had they known how small was the number of their assailants, six hundred against sixty thousand, the women might have strangled the invaders with their girdles," says

a French writer. As it was, panic seized the whole company, and in less than an hour the French victory was complete.

A large number of persons were made prisoners—Abd-el-Kader's wife and mother only escaping by the happy chance of their being unrecognised, and through the faithfulness of a negro slave. The booty was enormous. It comprised thousands of animals—cattle, horses, camels, and sheep—Abd-el-Kader's library, valued at £5,000, his military chest, containing millions of francs, besides others deposited in the smala for safety, and filled with gold and silver coins and precious stones.

Shortly after this crushing defeat, Abd-el-Kader retired across the frontier into Morocco, where the Emperor made him Caliph, and though he at first refused to assist him by force of arms, he was eventually drawn into a border-war with the French, who occupied some disputed territory at Lalla Maghnia. This war terminated in a great victory gained by the French over the Moors, known as the battle of Isly—a victory which finally secured their power in Africa.

Morocco was thankful to make peace, and the French could afford to be generous. They claimed no territory, no indemnity for the war; they only begged Sultan Abd-er-Rahman *to deliver them from Abd-el-Kader.*

This demand the Sultan of Morocco was not altogether able, however willing he might have been, to grant; for there were not wanting those who said, that had he pleased, Abd-el-Kader, so great was his popularity throughout Morocco, might at one stroke have dispossessed Muley Abd-er-Rahman, and mounted the Moorish throne. Abd-el-

Kader was not a man personally ambitious, and the stroke was not made.

But he bore a charmed life. Proscribed alike by the French and the Moorish Governments, he was able to defy both.

For some time, indeed, after the battle of Isly, he took no active steps, and reports of his death were circulated throughout Algeria.

Meanwhile a new champion arose among the Arabs, a certain Bou-Maza, a hermit, and man of reputed piety—a miracle worker in short—who, rallying the scattered Arab tribes, professed himself Sultan by the appointment of God, raised up for the extermination of the foreign invader.

He was after all but a vulgar charlatan, and those who would compare him to Abd-el-Kader surely, says M. Fillias, the historian of the conquest, "take the shadow for the light;" but at the time he had many partisans, and his personal bravery, added to his saintly reputation, gained him a measure of success. He was known as the "man of the goat," from his being supposed to possess a familiar, bearing that shape, through whom he received communications from another world. He subsequently surrendered to Colonel St. Arnaud at Orleansville, in 1847. Abd-el-Kader, though not a participator in the agitation caused by this man, did not hesitate to take advantage of it. Added to which, a singular act of savagery on the part of the French, had excited all the Arab tribes to a degree of resentment almost unprecedented.

The Ouled-Riah, a tribe who had never yet acknowledged French supremacy, and who had been implicated with Bou-Maza, were pursued by a French column unde

Colonel, afterwards Marshal, Pelissier. Being hard pressed, they retired with all their women and children into the cave of Frechich. Colonel Pelissier summoned them to surrender; they not only refused, but fired at and killed the envoy.

Enraged by this conduct, the French colonel ordered the mouth of the cave to be filled up with blocks of wood, and fired. Flames and smoke filled the cavern; frightful shrieks rent the air. The French column, drawn up at the mouth of the cave, waited to despatch any fugitives who might break from their horrible tomb of fire; but none came. Not a living soul escaped!

A cry of horror at this diabolical method of warfare rang through Europe at news of the deed, and the Arabs trembled with a desire to avenge the wrongs of their murdered brethren. Then Abd-el-Kader once more appeared on the scene, and revenged the murder of the Ouled-Riah by absolutely cutting in pieces a French column, only a few days after. With the handful of men still at his command, he yet contrived to inspire his enemies with terror, harassing them first on this side and then on that, passing unscathed through their thickest fire, and performing perfect prodigies of valour.

But such an unequal contest could not last long, and at length the heroic chieftain, gathering the small remnant of his band about him, declared that the time had come when further resistance was hopeless, and absolving them from the oath which they had sworn, now nine years ago, begged them to tell him, could anything more be done.

The sorrowful truth was too plain in the ragged group of spent and battered warriors who gathered about their chief.

On the night of December 21st, 1847, he sent to General Lamoricière, commander of the French forces, a paper, in which he offered to surrender on the one condition that he, his family and followers should be permitted to retire to some other Mahomedan country.

Lamoricière joyfully acceded to the terms, and hastened at once, to receive with honour the redoubtable chief, who had kept the armies of France at bay for so many years.

The promise of a safe transport to Alexandria or St. Jean d'Acre was afterwards confirmed in writing, and again by the mouth of the Duc d'Aumale, then governor-general of Algeria.

But no sooner was Abd-el-Kader actually in the power of the French, than the promise thus solemnly given and ratified was broken. From Toulon he was transferred to Pau. The Revolutionary Government of 1848 refused to consider itself bound by the engagements of that which it had overthrown, and in answer to the indignant remonstrances of the betrayed chief, declared "that it was under no obligation to Abd-el-Kader, and that it took him, as the previous Government had left him—a prisoner."

In June, 1848, Lamoricière was appointed Minister of War. Incredible as it may seem, this but ushered in a new season of persecution, for him, who by this time, had come to be known to the world as, the captive of Pau. He was removed from Pau Castle to the yet stricter confinement of the Château d'Amboise.

"Let kings and people learn from my example," wrote Abd-el-Kader, "what confidence is to be placed in the word of a Frenchman."

The honour of redeeming that word was left to Louis

Napoleon. Made President, almost his first act of power was to visit the illustrious prisoner, and personally grant the liberty of which he had been so long and so tyrannously deprived.

The gratitude of the simple-hearted Arab was touching. "Others have overthrown and imprisoned me," he said; "Louis Napoleon alone has conquered me."

After a short visit to Paris, where he was received as an honoured guest by the President, Abd-el-Kader left for the East, and subsequently established himself at Damascus, where, in 1860, he was the means of saving the lives of a large number of Christians threatened by the Druzes.

So ended the public life of a man, whom destiny rather than choice, had forced into the front ranks of life's great battle-field.

Few men, if any, of the world's great heroes have been less personally ambitious, less self-interested, more magnanimous in power, and more resigned in misfortune. A fervent piety guided his life, a spirit of honour and humanity breathed in all his actions. Let it not be forgotten that he was the first Arab who gave quarter, who discouraged the cruel practice of beheading the wounded, and that so far as his power extended, he acted not only in a humane, but in a generous manner, to all who fell into his hands prisoners.

In conclusion, he was a man in whom both friends and enemies recognised the quality *great*. To quote a French writer:—

"The Emir was undeniably a great politician as well as a valiant soldier. On another scene, with other men and means, he would have achieved wonders. His great glory was his statesmanship. He sought to reconstruct the Arab nationality which the Turks had destroyed.

He failed, not from any fault in himself, but because, though it is possible to galvanise a corpse, it is beyond human power to reanimate it. As a warrior he displayed incontestable superiority. Without artillery or munitions of war, he held at check an army of fifty thousand men for fifteen years. He has been taxed with cruelty. This accusation could more justly be brought against his opponents. War is at all times a savage game, but if ever war was legitimate, it was surely that waged by Abd-el-Kader, fighting in the name of God and his country."—*Histoire de la Conquête. M. Fillias.*

CHAPTER IX.

AFTER ABD-EL-KADER.—THE KABYLE WAR.—THE EMPIRE.—THE INSURRECTION OF 1871.

> "Each trained to arms since life began,
> Owning no tie but to his clan."
>
> *Lady of the Lake.*

AS may be imagined, the nine years' struggle with Abd-el-Kader had not done much to improve the position of Algeria as a colony. Everywhere farms had been ravaged, allotments abandoned in terrified haste, settlers massacred, or burned out of house and home. Even the plain of the Metidja, once for its fertility known as the "mother of the poor," had become a burnt and barren waste. Scarcely the walled and fortified towns afforded security to life or property; dismay had more than once penetrated into Algiers itself.

Bugeaud had come to Algiers in 1841 with the intention, which he lost no time in declaring, of being not only a conquering general, but also the father of the colony. He had himself, during some years of forced retirement under the late régime, turned his sword into a ploughshare, and was a successful practical agriculturist.

As soon as the battle of Isly gave him a moment's breathing-time from more active duties, he set himself seriously to the task of carrying out the scheme of colonization which

he had already planned. His notion was to form a great military colony, peopling the country with old soldiers, to whom free grants of land, together with a certain amount of capital and stock, were to be given, and who were bound to marry within six months after taking possession of their estates. This scheme was, at the time, combated with great energy by various other persons, who had all a special plan of colonization to propose, each of which was "warranted" successful.

The *question algérienne* again became a very agitated one in France, and a full-grown and completely established colony was loudly demanded by French impetuosity, as the immediate result of Abd-el-Kader's first serious defeat.

Bugeaud, in spite of opposition, having Louis Philippe's personal approval and support, managed to carry out to some extent, his pet scheme of military settlements. It did not prove on the whole very successful. Not many of his followers seemed to have possessed the versatile talents of their commander. To them the ploughshare was an infinitely more troublesome weapon to manage than the bayonet. The difficulty, too, of finding respectable wives "to order" was not small.

We read in the account given by Lieutenant Lamping of the foreign legion—

"So the soldier usually takes to himself some profligate woman not at all likely to attach him to his home, then he neglects his farm, dissipates the small sum allowed him by the Government, and the end of it all is, that he sells his oxen and plough, turns off his female companion, and enlists for a few years more. And now the old fellow who used to curse the service heartily, finds it quite a decent and comfortable way of living, and it is amusing to hear with what indignation he speaks of the life of a colonist."—*The French in Algiers, translated from the German by Lady Duff Gordon.*

In truth, in a very few years the military colonists established by General Bugeaud had disappeared, no one knew where; but on quitting his command in 1847, the General was able to point proudly to the progress which the province had made during his rule, to roads opened, bridges built, and various other public works completed, as well as victories won; and, in truth, though he was, perhaps, somewhat headstrong in carrying out his own notions, he was an active-minded and able man, to whom Algeria owes a considerable debt of gratitude, nor was the least of his good deeds, the importance which he gave to the equitable working of the *bureau arabe.*

The Duc d'Aumale's reign was a very short one, the one event of which was Abd-el-Kader's submission.

On the breaking out of the revolution of 1848 there were not wanting among the old African generals, those who were willing to turn their arms to the defence of the throne. But both the Duke and his brother Prince Joinville, refused to allow the country to be plunged into the horrors of civil war on their account.

In his farewell to the Algerians the Duke said—

"Faithful to my duties as a citizen and soldier, I have remained at my post as long as I thought my presence could be useful to my country. That situation no longer exists. Submitting to the national will, I depart; but from my exile, all my wishes will be for the glory and prosperity of France."

He then at once embarked for England, and was at first succeeded by General Changarnier; but during this troubled year of 1848, no less than four governors were successively appointed to the post of command.

Meanwhile renewed efforts at extensive colonization were

made, at enormous expense to the mother-country, for the sake of getting rid of that uncontrollable scum of society, which, during times of political agitation, always seems to bubble up to the surface, coming no one knows from whence; but again, through errors of administration, and under pressure of various difficulties, large sums were squandered, and great suffering and much loss of life occasioned among the unhappy colonists, who arrived in crowds in an unknown and unsettled country, to die of starvation and fever, before the elaborate machinery arranged for their aid could be got into working order.

In truth the country was hardly ripe for colonization.

The fall of Abd-el-Kader had scarcely afforded that tranquillity to Algeria, which so important an event seemed to promise.

When the news of his surrender reached Paris, "This," said the *Moniteur* of the day, "secures the peace of the colony. At last, France may, if necessary, transport to other quarters, the hundred thousand men she has hitherto required to keep the native population in check." This in truth was not strictly so.

Abd-el-Kader's submission was followed almost immediately by the flight of Louis Philippe, as the taking of Algiers had been by that of his predecessor—a strange fatality, surely, this which connected Algerian triumphs with the fall of crowned French heads—and the anarchy which afterwards prevailed in France, encouraged the Arabs to make fresh, though feeble efforts after liberty.

In all the three provinces there were risings, which were put down by what were known as "timely severities," and in 1849, the French carried their arms into the heart of the

Sahara, besieging and, after a most desperate struggle, in which cholera as well as Arab bullets thinned their ranks, capturing and destroying the town of Zaatcha, capital of the Zab country.

At this time a vote of the Assembly granted universal suffrage to the colony.

In the year 1851 there was a serious insurrection in the neighbourhoods of Milianah and Orleansville; but the greatest difficulties which the French have from this, almost up to the present time, experienced among the native population, have come from Kabylia—or the country somewhat arbitrarily so called—at least from the Kabyle tribes, which, as distinct from the Arabs, have from time immemorial occupied all the mountainous country, which covers so large a proportion of the area of Algeria.

In origin, in language, in government, manners and customs, distinct from, and opposed to, the Arabs, they had maintained their independence intact for many centuries. Sometimes allied with, but never submitting themselves to, the various conquering races who successively passed over the northern shore of Africa, they had from their inaccessible mountain eyries, seen the dwellers on the plains in the grasp of Carthaginians, Romans, Arabs, Turks, Spaniards, and French, and assisted now and then in the general mêlée, without endangering their own position, or modifying to the smallest extent, their ancient laws and regulations.

They formed among themselves a republic, a federation of free tribes, which has been not inaptly called a savage Switzerland, and amid their mountain fastnesses, were ever glad to welcome those whom tyranny, oppression, or crime

made fugitives from other communities. Once within these inaccessible natural strongholds, the sanctuary was physically as well as morally inviolable, and hither through a long course of ages, from the time of the Romans upwards, the persecuted had fled for refuge. But the existence of such a community in its midst, warlike and independent—the fact of such an asylum where its bitterest foes would be protected, and from whence perpetual attacks might be made—soon began to be a source of uneasiness to the French province.

Moreover, the Kabyles, as a people, had actually taken the offensive against the French; and, urged by the exhortations of their Marabouts, to whom, in spite of their independent character, they rendered the most implicit obedience, had warmly espoused the cause of Abd-el-Kader, himself a Hadji and Marabout.

But his submission by no means involved theirs—or rather their acquiescence in the French ascendancy; for up to the time of which we are speaking, there had been little or no talk of Kabyle conquest.

The first expedition aimed against them was in the year 1851, at which time a certain Marabout known as Bou-Barla, the man with the mule, was loudly preaching the holy war. At that time a force of nine thousand men was marched from Constantine upon Djidjelly, which was blockaded and captured; whereon most of the neighbouring tribes sent in their submission, and those who resisted were punished with great severity—their villages burnt, their trees felled, and their crops destroyed.

The following is an account of a Kabyle skirmish from the pen of M. Castellane:—

"As we neared the mountain, the distant buzzing noise of the enemy, like that of a bee-hive, ceased. Then suddenly as we advanced, from the ravines, the rocks, and woods, there arose mingled screams, yells, and bellowings, like those of wild beasts. The Kabyles, practised in ambuscades and retreats, glided among the thickets, and crawled rapidly along the chasmed ground to get close up to the enemy, when, firing off their pieces, they bounded away to avoid the corresponding shots. The scene was sufficient to strike terror into the stoutest, witnessing for the first time, so confused and frantic an uproar. They were not men, they were wild animals let loose, that environed us; and the formidable Kabyle sword, or *flissa*, dealt in close fighting many an ugly wound."—*Military Life in Algeria.*

Holding possession of Djidjelly, the French for this time, retired upon their laurels, leaving the Kabyles of the more distant mountains undisturbed in their fastnesses.

In this year, 1851, General Randon was made governor, and at the close of the year an extraordinary political revolution, converted the President of the French Republic into Napoleon III.

The Coup d'État, the facts of which are sufficiently well known, sent a new wave of population to the shore of Africa. Algiers had for some time past, been used rather extensively as a military penal settlement, but it now became the penitentiary of all those whose political creed differed from that of the Emperor, or who were believed to be dangerous to his interests.

On the night of the 2nd of December, while France, and Paris with it, unconscious of new destinies, peacefully slumbered, the Republic died and the new Empire awoke to being. When morning dawned, proclamations of the new reign were posted on every wall in Paris, and all the prominent men, to the number of seventy-eight, who represented any shade of opinion other than the Imperialist,

found themselves within the walls of a prison. Nor were these the only victims. Arrests were made throughout the country, and vast numbers of persons who were prominent as Republicans, or who showed an inclination to resist the new order of things, were shipped off either to Cayenne or Algeria.

In the latter case the *proscrits* on landing were despatched to camps, which were being established in distant, and as yet uncleared districts. There, formed into gangs, they were, under the superintendence of the military, set to the task of road-making, bridge-building, and other public works.

The ill-usage experienced by these unhappy exiles has been largely dwelt upon by Republican pamphleteers. It is to be hoped that their accounts are exaggerated; but as among the number of political offenders, were to be found many men of culture and refinement, totally unused to manual labour, it will readily be understood that the hardships of this kind of life were very great. After awhile some were permitted to return to France, many died, and great numbers having been torn away from the niches which they had occupied in their native country, settled down to begin life anew on the shores of Africa. Whether the sentiments of these men have, in spite of all efforts, permeated Algerian society it is hard to say, but it is certain that at the present moment—this year of grace 1878—there is not to be found a more anti-Napoleonic community than the African colony. What the next turn of the wheel will produce, who knows?

To return to the early days of the second Empire. When the war in the East broke out, a large number of troops left Algeria, among which were several native regiments. The

cause was popular with the Arabs, who in the defence of their co-religionists, for the first time found a bond of real sympathy between them and their French conquerors; added to which the Emperor's honourable and generous treatment of Abd-el-Kader, had attached him personally to them.

The Kabyles, less interested possibly in the fate of the Turks, with whom they had never had any relations, did not share the general feeling of satisfaction. They were, on the contrary, rather disposed to take advantage of the comparative poverty of the French resources.

In 1853 the fanatic Bou-Barla had again appeared, and an expedition to Kabylia was organized and commanded by Marshal MacMahon. In this, Bou-Barla was killed and the insurgent tribes subdued, but scarcely had the troops retired, when fresh troubles arose. The tribes, excited by the preaching of the Marabouts, and too often by the severe and indiscriminating measures of the French, rose in retaliation, murdering and pillaging all the Europeans upon whom they could lay hands, to be ravaged and massacred in their turn by the next French column, which found its way to their mountain fastnesses. This unsettled and unsatisfactory state of things continued until 1857, when, the Crimean war over, Marshal Randon found himself in command of a large reinforcement.

A complete conquest of the Kabyle country was now resolved upon.

The fort of Tizi-Ouzou was at this time the French frontier-post. It occupies a little isolated hill at the foot of the Djurdjura Mountains, separated from them by a broad but shallow river.

Here, the French troops, to the number of thirty thousand, concentrated in the month of May, 1857. Marshal MacMahon was at the head of one division, General Yussuf of a second, General Renault of a third—Marshal Randon, the governor-general, himself holding the chief command.

"The fort of Tizi-Ouzou was well supplied with provisions and material of every kind, while strings of camels, mules and waggons toiled along the road from Algiers, making good the inroads caused by the daily consumption of so large a force.

"The three principal ridges of the mountains, were crowned at every available height by populous-looking villages. The rugged sides of the mountains ran down to the plain, often in abrupt precipices; and as the eye ranged upwards towards the distant snow mountains, ravine and hill clothed with noble forests of fig, olive, and lance-wood, met the view. Thickets of impenetrable cacti and aloes covered the lower parts of the hills, and enormous blocks of rock rolled down from the mountains, were scattered here and there.

"Upon these apparently impregnable strongholds the French troops made their attack. The fire became heavier and heavier as the troops scrambled up the sheer face of the mountain, now leaping from rock to rock, now tearing through the prickly underwood, perfectly unconscious of the wounds received from it, and men fell fast as the defenders' fire flashed from every bush and rock. In the rear came the mules picking up the wounded, and carrying them away to the hospital tents. Last of all followed strong working parties, who with spade and mattock proceeded at once to trace out a rough road for the advance of the baggage of the column."—*Sketches during the Kabyle War. Lieut.-Col. Walmsley.*

But the resistance, however brave and determined, and however aided by natural defences, of a body of badly armed villagers, could not but in the end, prove ineffectual against the determined assault, of such a powerful body of well-trained and thoroughly equipped French troops.

In spite of heavy losses, the enthusiasm, the *élan*, the blood-thirst of the Zouaves, carried them on. Height after

height was escaladed, and village after village sent up, each from its crested height, a broad beacon of flame into the still night air, as a token of deadly vengeance accomplished.

Again to quote Col. Walmsley:—

"The history of one was that of all. The dash up the mountain height on the edge of which was built the Kabyle village, whose rude walls had in peace crowned the mountain for ages; the fall of a few men as they struggled forward, and were swept down by the fire of its defenders; the hand-to-hand fight; the rolling volleys of the attacking corps, as the Kabyles after a sharp and energetic resistance retired steadily and undismayed, generally taking with them their wounded and dead. The butt-ends of the muskets had hardly driven in the splintered doors, before a red jet of flame would shoot from the interior; how lighted, or by which of the blood-stained smoke-begrimed figures, who were busily engaged in rummaging the poor hovel from end to end in search of hidden treasures, it is impossible to say."

At length the Beni-Raten, the most powerful of the Djurdjura tribes, submitted, receiving from the French, considerably to their surprise, easy and generous terms. Their local government was left undisturbed; they were to be disarmed, but with permission to sell their weapons; and a certain annual tribute was imposed. On their side they pledged themselves to offer no further annoyance to the French—a pledge which they most honourably kept throughout the campaign; but many other of the more remote tribes remained unconquered.

An advance yet farther into the mountains was projected. In the meantime the whole of the French army set to work, began, and in seventeen days completed, one of the most remarkable pieces of military engineering in Algeria—a road through seventeen miles of mountainous country, from Tizi-Ouzou to the very centre of the Kabyle

Djurdjura, where the stronghold now known as Fort National stands. When, on the 14th of June 1857, the first stone of the new fortress was laid by Marshal Randon, it was destined to be called by another name—that of the then popular Emperor, for whom, as the ceremony concluded, vivas and loud huzzas rang from thirty thousand throats, waking the echoes of the rocky ravines.

Very soon after the foundation of Fort Napoléon, Icheriden and other Kabyle strongholds yielded; and after altogether sixty days' fighting, the tribes put down their arms, and Marshal Randon had the satisfaction of being able to report the Kabyles, as at length, and for the first time in the course of their long history, entirely subdued.

This General's government was altogether a brilliant and a useful one in Algeria. In his time, not only was Kabylia conquered and the French dominion extended in the desert as far as Touggourt, but many public works were undertaken, railways begun, telegraph lines established, schools built, roads opened out even in the Sahara, and artesian wells sunk.

In 1858, however, the constantly changing policy of the home-Government with regard to Algeria, created quite a new order of things. The office of governor-general was abolished, and the affairs of the colony were to be in the hands of a minister, the first to take the office being Prince Napoleon. He remained in office barely a year, and subsequently the military rule was re-established.

But the changes introduced into the administration in 1858 almost amounted to a revolution. "Not only," says M. Fillias, "was there to be no more governor-general, but

the *bureaux arabes* were also abolished. There was to be no more native aristocracy; the tribes were to be no longer responsible for crimes committed by the natives—indeed the tribes themselves were done away with." The country was divided into communes governed by civil functionaries; but the changes of all kinds were so sudden as to create much practical inconvenience, and loud complaints arose on all sides, from both Europeans and natives.

In the middle of all this agitation the Emperor Napoleon, accompanied by the Empress, paid his first visit to Algeria in 1860.

As the result of his observations during this journey, the Emperor declared that he found the natives oppressed, and ruined by taxation and usury, and he at once set his imperial machinery to work, to remedy some of the abuses from which he found them suffering. They were declared French citizens, and the collective property of the tribes was secured to them.

Two new laws were also made at this time, having regard to the administration of justice among the natives. The native courts were subjected to the surveillance of the French magistrates, with appeal from the native to the French tribunals; and the marriages of the natives were permitted to be contracted under French law—a measure specially intended for the protection of the native women, and for the suppression of polygamy.

Other results beneficial to the colony, followed the Emperor's visit. Algiers was made a free port, and free trade was established between it and France; 100,000,000 francs were voted for expenditure on public works; the commune was enfranchised; institutions of credit were established.

General Pelissier was appointed governor-general in 1860, and Marshal MacMahon succeeded him in 1864.

In this year there was an attempt at a native insurrection, which was quickly put down; and at the same time an important measure was passed, which secured to the Arabs individual property instead of tribal tenure, by which they had previously held the land.

In 1865 the Emperor Napoleon again visited Algiers, and made addresses both to the Europeans and natives, urging the former to conciliation towards the natives, and hopefulness in the future of their adopted country; while pointing out to the latter, the benefits which would accrue to them from a civilized and just rule.

The years 1866 and 1867 presented new and unlooked-for difficulties in the Algerian colony. No sooner did a few years of peace and security seem to promise a hopeful future for both natives and Europeans, than fresh causes of anxiety arose in the unprecedented drought, which in these years successively produced a failure of crops all over the country, and even dried up the sources of the springs. These misfortunes, though materially affecting all classes, were most severely felt by the Arabs, who having been for the most part despoiled of their stores of corn, were literally left without any means of subsistence, while the use of impure water for drinking purposes, was a fruitful source of disease. Too passive to make any strong exertions against what was, according to their creed, so evidently *ordered*, they for the most part resigned themselves to their fate, and perished unmurmuringly of famine and cholera, in thousands and tens of thousands.

In addition to the scourges of pestilence and scarcity in

1866, an extraordinary plague of locusts devastated the country, devouring what the drought had spared—though they in their turn were used as an article of food, the Arabs of the desert considering them delicacies, and consuming them, we are assured, "with the zest of a Londoner for shrimps."

Another visitation at this sad time was a severe earthquake, which in January, 1867, destroyed several villages in the Metidja, and injured many others.

Altogether, in spite of the strenuous exertions of the French, and more particularly of the clergy, it is estimated that at least two hundred thousand persons perished from the effects of these combined disasters.

Some of the noblest and most hopeful charities of Algiers, notably the orphanages, took their rise through the benevolent exertions of Monsgr. Lavigerie, Archbishop of Algiers at this time.

The last tragical chapter of Algerian history is the revolt of 1871.

At the time of the breaking out of the Franco-German war, the African colony was in a state of perfect tranquillity. The government of the Empire had always been, and deservedly so, popular with the natives. Native troops marched willingly to the front in defence of their French fellow-countrymen, and so secure was the country believed to be, that under pressure of circumstances, more and continually more regiments were withdrawn from it, until it might be said to have been left practically undefended. Possibly as an extra precaution, and one which it was believed would be quite unneeded, the word of Mokrani, a powerful Arab chieftain of the province of Constantine,

holding important office under the French Government, and decorated with the cross of the Legion of Honour, was demanded and given, that during the European struggle, he and his tribes would remain faithful. This promise, given by Mokrani to General Durrien, the governor-general, and kept to the letter—that is up to the signing of the treaty of peace between France and Germany, but not a moment longer—probably saved Algeria to France.

The disaster of Sedan and the fall of Napoleon, produced a marked change in the disposition of the Arabs towards the French in Algeria, and a certain inclination showed itself, to take advantage of their momentary weakness; added to which the impolitic naturalization (at this time) of the Jewish population, and the enrolment of the Jews in the army, gave serious umbrage to the Mahomedan body.

The wandering tribes of the desert, relieved of the pressure of French troops in their midst, broke out into revolt; and, under pretext of putting down the insurrection, one tribe made war against the other, and a general state of disorder ensued.

In the province of Constantine a squadron of *spahis* mutinied, and some Bedouin tribes attacked a French settlement. A certain uneasiness, therefore, began to be felt throughout the colony; and the peace which would release the mass of troops from other duties, was eagerly looked for. That event, curiously enough, precipitated the catastrophe.

Mokrani, released from his word, formally declared war, resigned his functions, gave up his cross of the Legion of Honour, and permitted forty-eight hours to elapse before beginning hostilities. He then, collecting his tribes around

him, marched to the attack. He was subsequently killed in a battle, fighting heroically to the last.

It was in Kabylia that the most serious events occurred. Excited by the news of Mokrani's revolt and partial successes in the plain, and urged on by the preaching of a famous Marabout, Shiekh-el-Hadded, a paralyzed fanatic, the whole country lighted as with a torch. Bougie, Dellys, and Djidjelly, on the coast, were completely cut off from the interior. The isolated Fort Napoléon sustained a severe two-months' siege. The village of Tizi-Ouzou was destroyed, and the garrison shut up in the fort. Everywhere farms, settlements, and factories were destroyed, while Palestro, a solitary village among the mountains defended only by a handful of gendarmes, was the scene of a deplorable tragedy. The French population, under a hundred in number, entrenched themselves within two buildings, which they hastily fortified and held against a strong force of Arabs. The one, surrendering on honourable terms, its occupants, to the number of fifty-four, were immediately massacred with circumstances of great cruelty. The beleaguered garrison of the second building, being burnt out of their refuge, were also forced to capitulate. These, of whom a large proportion were women and children, were made prisoners, but after enduring great hardships were eventually released.

Another outbreak took place to the west of Algiers, in the mountainous district between Milianah and the sea. Cherchel was invested for a whole month; and Zurich, a village of recent creation, was gallantly defended until relief came, by a small force of seventy men, forty of whom were military prisoners. In this district the Kabyles did

not succeed in their attempts on a single village, though they burned and ravaged all the outlying farmsteads. The return of the troops to the colony quickly restored order and security.

Since that time all the efforts of the Government have been directed towards the advancement of the colony.

All the lands of the insurgents in the insurrection of 1871 were declared forfeit; this, in addition to a fine of 30,000,000 francs, and the incarceration of the heads of the rebellion.

The confiscation of property has not been carried out to its fullest extent, but from the fine, liberal allowance has been made to the sufferers from the insurrection, and on a portion of the forfeited lands, numerous immigrants from Alsace and Lorraine have been established.

Already various villages, peopled entirely by these voluntary exiles, have sprung up in different parts of the colony with a promise of success—the Teutonic nature of these people standing them in better stead as colonists than their French predilections would be likely to do.

But, in truth, the hard days of the colony seem now to be over; order is established throughout the length and breadth of the land; the submission, if not the good-will, of the native population is secured; and as prejudices wear away and old scores are wiped out in benefits received and given, the good-will between the races, will, it is to be hoped, increase and strengthen.

A French writer says—

"The Algerian question is a double one, at once of honour and of interest. On the first point there can be no discussion or doubt. France has received of God the mission of civilizing Northern Africa. However hard the task may be, however great the sacrifices it im-

poses upon her, she must persevere in this course; it would be a disgrace to her to do otherwise. There are, indeed, certain writers in France, who, either from ignorance or the pure love of contradiction, still protest against the conquest and colonization of Algeria; some only thinking of the matter from an economical point of view, and counting every penny that the country has cost, as though these great questions of humanity could be treated as merely commercial speculations; others, on the contrary, taking a sentimental view of things, continually groaning over the sad fate of the Arabs. We have, they say, robbed them of their country, confiscated to our own profit their nationality, liberty, and fortunes; at every step we violate their deepest feelings.

"But in this argument there is an error which it would be well to correct. God has not given the earth to man that he may leave it a wild and trackless desert, and the man who does not cultivate the land committed to him, is rightly dispossessed of it. And it is the duty of all civilized nations, not only to point out to the savage the way in which he should go, but by every means in his power to make him walk in it.

"In short, nothing is less true than that pretended philanthropy, which would make out the Arabs to be oppressed patriots deprived of their just heritage."—*M. A. Joanne.*

At the same time the commercial prospects of the colony should now be bright. It should no longer be, as it has more than once not inaptly been called, "a great quagmire in which the treasure and the blood of France have been swallowed up." To quote another French politician on the subject, M. de Broglie:—

"Whatever sceptics may say to the contrary, Algeria is a fertile country, and the experience of every year goes to prove it. She may not possess those exceptional treasures which attract capitalists, she may not bear on her bosom nor beneath it, mines of untold wealth to inspire the cupidity of the adventurer. It is not, after all, the land of the thousand and one nights. Its rivers do not flow with gold. But it is a country which, with moderate efforts and expenditure, will largely yield the chief elements of life and wealth—bread, oil, wine, and provender for cattle. Let good labourers but come with hands ready for toil and pockets fairly furnished, and they will find the land yield them back a steady and increasing return."

Indeed, when we remember what has already been accomplished by the French in the forty-seven years of their occupation; when we remember the difficulties of all kinds they have had to surmount; when we consider the state of utter barbarism in which the whole country was wrapped not half a century ago, and see it now, peaceable, secure, already cultivated very largely, and beginning to prosper—instead of being surprised at what is left undone, we may justly admire that which has been achieved, while we heartily wish for our neighbours across Channel, success in their first serious attempt at colonization.

CHAPTER X.

THE FRENCH TOWN.—THE MARKETS.—THE MOSQUE DE LA PÊCHERIE.—THE GRAND MOSQUE.

> "Towered cities please us then,
> And the busy hum of men."
>
> *Milton.*

IT is almost certain that the first impression of Algiers on landing will be one of disappointment. Seen from the sea, the appearance of the town is so extremely picturesque, that the traveller, who at the end of his long and fatiguing journey finds himself in, as it seems, an ordinary modern French town, is driven up a sloping carriage-drive bordered with French warehouses, and constructed, he hears with some disgust, by an English company, to a row of four-storied modern houses, with arcaded fronts, which might just as well be a piece cut out of the Rue de Rivoli as anything else, feels naturally aggrieved and resentful, and is inclined to ask peevishly whether he has come so far, only to see—*this*. It is still early morning when he lands, but he has been so many hours awake and stirring, that it does not seem so to him, and as he stumbles out of the bright sunshine into the dim hotel, he is surprised to find all the *persiennes* fast closed; to be greeted by sleepy-eyed waiters in every variety of undress costume; to see the *salle à*

manger just being turned out and swept; while his humour is by no means improved by the fact, that unless he have secured his apartments well beforehand, he is pretty sure to be conducted up endless staircases to the worst and least convenient rooms in the house.

But when, in defiance of all Algerian notions, he has thrown wide the windows, to let in the glorious golden sunshine, and feasted his eyes on the wondrous beauty of the scene that lies before him—the grand bay with the snow-capped Djurdjura Mountains standing out of the blue sea far to the right, the harbour gay with shipping at his feet, and the boulevard already beginning to swarm with its motley crowd of strangely-clad figures, then already his mood changes, and he inclines to think his journey *mari terrâque* has not been all in vain.

For the sake of effect, if not of convenience, it is certainly a pity that the French have, during the forty-seven years of their occupation, so completely transformed that part of Algiers which looks upon the sea. Formerly, the quaint flat-roofed Moorish houses extended without break to the very water's edge in one long slope, as may be seen in an interesting picture of Algiers at the time of the French conquest, in the Bibliothèque.

These Moorish dwellings, to the number, it is said, of eighty thousand, together with a fine double row of palm-trees which extended for miles along the shore, were destroyed for the construction of the boulevard which now fronts the town. The first stone of this, was laid in September, 1860, by the Empress, and bore her name. It has since, following the progress of events, been changed into the *Boulevard de la République.* The road is built on a series

of double arches at a height of about forty feet above the quay and harbour, with which it is connected by various flights of stone steps, and by two inclined carriage drives.

The work, a fine piece of engineering, was constructed by Sir Morton Peto, at a cost of about £300,000. Some of the arches are utilised as barracks, which hold the command of the port, and others as warehouses and offices. The boulevard extends over a frontage of 3,700 feet.

On this boulevard, which is still incomplete, are situated the *Banque d'Algérie* and the *Hôtel d'Orient*, from which, to the right, past the garden of Place Bresson and a wide open space, on which an imperial residence was to have been built, but which is now appropriated to a new hotel, is the *General Post Office.*

From the Hôtel d'Orient, a few yards to the left, is the *Place du Gouvernement*, a large open paved square, planted on three sides with a double row of plane-trees, and bordered also on three sides with shops and cafés, as to the brilliancy and charms of which, French guide-books are enthusiastic.

On the fourth side, the Place du Gouvernement is open to the sea, and commands a splendid view. Towards this side is a handsome equestrian bronze statue of the Duc d'Orléans, by Marochetti. It was cast from cannon taken in the siege of the town, and has some bas-reliefs on its marble base, representing on the north side, the siege of Antwerp, and on the south the passage of the Col de Mouzaïa, one of the most signal victories gained over Abd-el-Kader. In front of the *Hôtel de la Régence*, which looks upon the square, is a group of palm and orange trees; close to these is a clump of bamboos, with a pretty fountain.

It is here that the military band plays three times a week, and the scene is then an animated one, from the variety of costumes of all nations which are displayed upon the sunny pavement. Chairs are then arranged for visitors, and there are also numerous permanent seats upon the "Place," but these are chiefly appropriated by Arabs, and are therefore not serviceable, except as centres of strikingly picturesque groups.

The Place du Gouvernement, with some of the adjoining streets, occupies the site of the famous old palace of the Djenina (or little garden), the private residence and harem of the Deys.

"The most beautiful house of Algiers is that of the Bashaw or Viceroy, which is in the centre of the town, the most remarkable feature about it being the two galleries, one over the other, upheld by double rows of white marble and porphyry columns, with mosaic enrichments." —*Histoire de Barbarie. Pierre Dan.*

"In this palace there are a multitude of chambers, large and small, lofty and low, all very well built, and some of them panelled with cedar-wood and oak, painted and adorned after the Moorish style."—*Topografia de Argel*, 1649. *Haedo.*

The palace was certainly one of the most interesting historic monuments of Algiers, and its complete destruction is to be regretted.

The policy of the French seems to have been to efface as much as possible the Algiers of the past, and to substitute in its stead a commonplace and utterly uninteresting French town. They have, happily, as yet not altogether succeeded in this; but the constant demolitions and so-called improvements, are a source of serious concern to the small minority among the French-Algerians, who are possessed of a taste for the antique or the picturesque. We quote a

passage on the subject from the pen of the late M. Berbrugger, the talented conservator of the Bibliothèque in Algiers :—

"Mussulman Algiers, such as we found it in 1830, is disappearing bit by bit under the indifferent eyes of the European invader. Public improvements sweep it away wholesale, public safety demands that it should be pulled to pieces in detail. The overwhelming wave of our French population, with its natural distaste to the native style of architecture, destroys it, or at least completely transforms it, whenever possible. In a quarter of a century, a Moorish building will be as great a curiosity to the native of Algiers, as to the European traveller.

"This work of destruction is justified in the main, by the triumph of a superior civilization. We will not attempt to contest nor even to criticize it in principle, but it seems only fair to admit, that there should be exceptions to this general demolition; certain buildings deserve to escape the common fate, by reason of their architectural value, or for their interest as historical monuments. Why then, are they not preserved? Is it to be desired that a few years hence, no trace whatever shall remain of the Mussulman city on the site of old El-Dje-zaïr? This would be a Vandalism dishonouring even to a barbarous nation. Civilized France surely does not desire that posterity should have the right of reproaching her for such a deed. She will preserve from the destructive pickaxe those remaining monuments—unhappily too few—which merit the honour of being spared."

The special object of the appeal, however, the old palace of Djenina, did not meet with a better fate than that of its less important surroundings. It had already been divided amongst a variety of occupants, part of the building being used for barracks, part turned into shops and warehouses. Fire, the work of an incendiary, destroyed a considerable portion of it. At last, after long discussion, in 1854, it was doomed to make way for the march of modern ideas.

From the Place du Gouvernement various streets diverge. That which runs parallel with the boulevard at the back of the Hôtel d'Orient, the *Rue Bab-Azoun*, is by far the best

street in Algiers. It has an arcaded pavement in its whole length, and some excellent shops. It was, until the construction of the boulevard, the main artery of the town, and the site of a street in the old Roman town of Icosium. The name of this street, *Bab-Azoun*, means in Arabic "Gate of Grief," and was so called because it led to the place of public punishment and execution, the Gate Bab-Azoun, with its cruel spikes of torture. This spot of melancholy memories, where under the despotic barbarian rule, so many unfortunate people suffered a miserable death, is now covered by the large garden or "square," as the French are learning to call such intramural plantations, of the *Place Bresson*. Here is the *Theatre*, the best French building in Algiers, close by the *Hôtel d'Europe*. The houses of the "Place" are not yet finished, but it is even larger than the Place du Gouvernement, and bids fair to rival it.

On Place Bresson was also the tomb or koubba of the celebrated Marabout Sidi Betka, he who happily predicted the defeat of the Spanish invasion under Charles V. It was considered a specially sacred spot, and for centuries, no pirate galley left the port without saluting, for good luck, the ashes of the holy man, by whose intercession it was believed the storm had been raised, which rid the country of the foreign foe.

The Place Bresson is the centre of a great deal of new building. A broad arcaded street, Rue Constantine, is being formed at the southern end of it. The ground between it and the boulevard is laid out into roads, and the names, Rue de la Liberté, Rue de la Paix, &c., are conspicuously posted up, but the streets are as yet in the

bosom of the future, so that the houses on the Place Bresson (Hôtel d'Europe and others) are for the present actually facing the sea.

On the south-west side of Place Bresson, a whole modern suburb of Algiers creeps up the steep hill-side; but leaving this for awhile, let us retrace our steps under the shady arcades of the Rue Bab-Azoun, until we come to a flight of stone steps on the left. This leads into the Place de Chartres, the chief market of Algiers, which is well worthy of a visit, not only for the picturesque groups which may often be found there, but actually for the sake of seeing the things exposed for sale. The bushels of green peas, the piles of French beans, the forests of fresh salads, the myriads of eggs—these, all in the midst of what should be winter, to say nothing of the flowers, brilliant in tint and odorous, which one must come early in the morning to see, or they will all be gone.

Naturally, the Algerian housewife does her marketing early, before the heat of the day—which by nine o'clock makes a sunny market-place unpleasant. It is then that great bouquets of roses—January roses, worth half-a-crown each, in Covent Garden—may be bought for a franc, enormous bunches of violets, as big as a plate, for half that sum, and vegetables, to those who know how to buy them, at proportionate prices.

It need scarcely be said that an Englishman or Englishwoman purchasing, pays the price of his or her nationality, yet even so, the cost of nearly all articles of food in Algiers, is, compared with England, extremely low.

The moment a stranger enters or approaches the market-place, he is surrounded by a number of little bare-legged

bright-eyed Arab boys, each with a soft palmetto basket, or, perhaps, two or even three slung on his arm and over his shoulder.

"Porter quelq'chose, porter quelq'chose, *Anglais?*" they cry in chorus, recognising one's nationality in a moment; and it is difficult to select one from among the number of eager little applicants.

These boys are proverbially honest. The present writer was accompanying a French lady on her marketing expedition, one morning during the past winter. A small Arab was already well laden with poultry, fruit, and other delicacies. The housewife stopped at a fresh stall to make purchases, the bargaining taking some considerable time, as it seems always to do in sunny southern lands. All at once the stranger, ignorant of the ways and manners of the natives, observes with some alarm, that the small Arab has disappeared. "Oh," says the French lady, smiling, "there is no fear; he will come back; we shall see him again presently." A curious fact which actually takes place. "They are quite to be trusted, these boys," adds the habituée of the place. "Often I have given them their four sous and sent them home with my purchases quite alone, while I pay visits or go to some other part of the town, and I have never found the least thing to be missing." It is to be feared that a like confidence could scarcely be placed in the integrity of a London street boy!

We turn back again down the steps, and by the Rue Bab-Azoun find ourselves once more in the Place du Gouvernement.

A flight of broad steps, upon and over which, Arabs, wrapped in their white burnous, lounge and bask in the

brilliant sunshine, leads, at the spot where the tramways start, from the higher level of the boulevard, to the quay.

Without quite descending we turn to the left, and find ourselves under the arches in the *Pêcherie*, or Fish-market. This also is a sight worthy to be seen by those curious in such matters, especially in the early morning or late afternoon, when the hauls of fish have just been brought in.

It is a most extraordinary collection of monsters, and impresses one vastly with the sense of being in strange latitudes. All the fish—from the great sea-wolf, which, cut into slices, looks like very coarse beef-steak, and tastes, we are told, like pork, to the tiny sardine lying in silver heaps on the ground—are unfamiliar to our northern seas, and in taste, we must admit, very inferior.

We turn from the Pêcherie into a small passage lined with oyster and fruit stalls. A few steps bring us to the door of the mosque *Dja-ma-el-Djedid* (the new), more commonly known as the Mosque of the Pêcherie. It is a building, which from its prominent position and peculiar style of architecture, has attracted us from the first moment of setting foot in Algiers, or indeed even before, since its gleaming white cupola close to the water's edge, forms one of the most striking and picturesque objects, in the view we have of the town from the sea. It is whitewashed to a dazzling whiteness, and has scarcely any exterior windows, and those of the very smallest size, after the true Eastern style; but it is built curiously enough, considering its purpose, in the shape of a Latin cross, with one central dome, a smaller one at each of the four corners, and a tall, graceful minaret rising from the north-west side. With

regard to its form, a legend is extant. It is said that the architect was a Christian slave, a Genoese, forced by his Moslem tyrants to a work uncongenial to him. He revenged himself by perpetuating in the Mahomedan temple the symbol of his own faith, and suffered death by impalement in consequence.

Mosque de la Pêcherie.

The interior is extremely plain, and those who enter a mosque for the first time, will certainly be struck, not only by the severe simplicity of the building, but also by the evident devotion of the worshippers. The whole atmosphere of the place is intensely solemn and quiet, and impresses the beholder very much more than many Christian places of

worship, as a house of prayer—a building set apart and dedicated to God.

Here, at least, are no gaudy effects, no tinsel-covered images, nothing to offend, nothing to prevent the prayer of the most Christian soul from ascending to the footstool of the Maker. The chief glory of Mahomet lay in this, that he was an iconoclast, a breaker-down of idols; the strength of his teaching in his constant proclamation of the "one God." And there can be no doubt that it is this grand and never-forgotten principle, which has not only proved the vitality of the Mahomedan faith, but which makes Christianity, in the form in which it is so often encountered by Mahomedans, an offence and a stumbling-block.

The Algerians make no objection to strangers entering their mosques; but it should be distinctly understood that it is not permitted to walk on the matting or carpet with which the floors are covered, without removing the shoes.

In Mahomedan countries the Divine command given to Moses still holds good. Nor may the visitor set his shoes down on the floor except with the soles put together, as the Arabs do. A breach of these rules is considered not only sacrilegious, but is also an offence against good manners, since no Eastern thinks of entering a matted or carpeted room, without leaving his slippers at the door.

The Mosque de la Pêcherie is covered only with matting, which does not extend quite to the end of the building, so that it can be seen tolerably well without this process, which to European notions has certainly something of discomfort about it. Mats are also hung round the lower part of the columns supporting the gallery of painted wood-

work, which alone breaks the severe monotony of the building.

This mosque is frequented chiefly by Arabs of the lower orders, of the sect of the "Hanefi;" for among the Mahomedans, as, unhappily, among the Christians, are numerous divisions, although the rancour between the sects is by no means so strong as among Christians. The Hanefites, or followers of reason, do not consider themselves bound by the traditions of Mahomet, as are the other sects. Their founder was one Abu Hanifa, who was much persecuted on account of his opinions. At the entrance of the building is a constantly flowing fountain, used for ablution before prayer, the Mahomedan rule on this point being very strict. "He who prays to the Lord cannot be too pure." "Cleanliness is one half of faith and the key of prayer," declared the Moslem Prophet. And at all hours of the day, a group of tawny bare-legged Arabs may be seen clustered about the fountain, busily employed in their labours of washing head, hands, and feet—no work of supererogation—before proceeding to worship.

On leaving the mosque, ascending the steps, and turning to the right, a little door, apparently in the blank wall of the mosque, will be found standing invitingly open. The visitor who enters will be startled to find himself suddenly in the presence of three or four extremely dignified turbaned personages, who sit cross-legged in great state all in a row, on a strip of matting. Black-lettered, learned-looking books are scattered here and there about the floor. It is an Arab court of justice; and those to whom fate in such matters is propitious, may often come here upon curious little "bits" of Eastern home-life, especially in the matter

of matrimonial exchanges. The Mahomedan law of divorce is a tolerably lax one, and although a follower of the Prophet is not allowed more than four wives at a time, there is no limit to the number of partners whom he may repudiate. Women, when they appear as witnesses in the court, do not enter it, but give their evidence through a small—a very small—window in the wall.

The open "Place" facing the mosque was the old slave-market.

In the Rue de la Marine, which we have just entered, is situated the mosque *Djamaa-el-Kebir*, or the *Grand Mosque.* Before the French conquest there were no less than a hundred Mahomedan temples in Algiers. There are now only five, the others having been pulled down, or converted into churches, or used for other purposes. Of these the Grand Mosque is the largest and handsomest; it is also the most ancient in Algiers, dating from the eleventh century, if not from an earlier period, which is considered probable by the peculiar structure of the red-tiled roof, from which the universal dome of later Mahommedan mosques, is conspicuously absent. The striking façade in the Rue de la Marine, with its handsome marble columns and fountain, is a recent addition to the building, the pillars having been removed from a mosque which stood on the site of the Place du Gouvernement, and which was destroyed at the same time as the old palace of Djenina.

The entrance to the mosque is by a fine arcaded court, in the centre of which is a fountain shaded by orange-trees. The interior, which is extremely plain, is divided into numerous arcades by pillars supporting the picturesqu

horse-shoe arch. The columns are wrapped round to the height of several feet with matting, and the floor is completely covered with rich old Moorish carpets; but with the exception of a few lamps suspended from the roof, the *mihrab*, a small niche in the wall indicating the east, or the direction of Mecca, and the pulpit, which has a kind of gallery attached to it, the place is absolutely bare.

The general effect however, with its subdued light let in through tiny coloured windows, and its fragrance of Eastern incense, is extremely impressive; and the picturesque costumes, and the dignified gestures of those who may at any time of the day be found at their devotions here, form themselves into pictures on the mind's eye, not easily to be effaced.

The postures of the Mahomedan at prayer are very striking and reverent. His face to the East, he stands or kneels upon the ground, with his hands held up, as though the palms were a book from which he is reading. At the name of God he prostrates himself in such a manner that seven parts of his body—his head, hands, feet, and knees—touch the earth together. These genuflections form a part of every act of prayer, which as a rule begins with the introductory words of the Koran—

"Praise be to God, the Lord of all creatures, the most merciful, the Lord of the day of judgment! Thee do we worship. We implore Thy aid. Direct us in the right way."

The Grand Mosque is used as a place of worship by the Maleki sect, to which the Moors and the wealthier Arabs chiefly belong. This is, according to Dr. Sale, the second orthodox sect of the Mahomedans, whose founder was Malec Ebu Ans.

"This doctor is said to have paid great regard to the traditions of Mahommed. In his last illness, a friend going to visit him found him in tears, and asking him the reason of it, he answered, 'How should I not weep, and who has more reason to weep than I? Would to God that for every question decided by me according to my own opinion I had received so many stripes! Then would my account be easier.' Al Ghazali thinks it a sufficient proof of Malec's directing his knowledge to the glory of God, that being once asked his opinion as to forty-eight questions, his answer to thirty-two of them was, that he did not know; it being no easy matter for one who has any other view than God's glory, to make so frank a confession of his ignorance."—*Dr. Sale's Preliminary Discourse to the Koran.*

It would perhaps, not be out of place to state here briefly the chief points of Mahomedan doctrine and practice. They have seven fundamental principles of faith: 1. Belief in one indivisible God; 2. In angels and demons; 3. In the inspiration of the Koran; 4. In the prophets, under which name they include both Mahomet and Christ. 5. In the resurrection and the day of judgment; 6. In heaven and hell; and 7. In God's absolute decree and predestination. They also believe in the doctrine of original sin, holding the theory that each child at its birth, has a little black spot in its heart, which either increases or diminishes with years; the tradition with respect to Mahomet being, that when God chose him as His prophet, He sent an angel to open his breast, and take out from his heart the natural stain.

The chief points of Mahomedan practice are: 1. Prayer, which is enjoined five times a day; 2. Ablution before prayer; 3. Almsgiving; 4. Fasting. The annual fast of the Mahomedans is during the whole month of Ramadân, lasting thirty days, because it is said Adam wept thirty days after his expulsion from Paradise before obtaining God's pardon and favour, added to which it was the time when

the Koran was revealed from Heaven. As the Mahomedan months are lunar the fast is movable, and when it occurs in the summer, its hardships are considerably increased. It is kept very strictly. From daybreak to sunset nothing must pass the lips of a Mussulman, not even a drop of water, some, it is said, being so cautious, that they will not open their mouths to speak, lest they should breathe the air too freely.

The Ramadân is announced by the firing of a cannon in Algiers as in other Mahomedan countries, and at sunset each day, when the fast is broken, the same sound heralds relief to the fainting population.

"After so many hours of total abstinence, it may be imagined how welcome to the ears of the hungry people is the report of this gun. The town seems to awake, the scene changes at once from a state of sulky obedience to animation and joy. The minarets are lighted up, while from the highest gallery the Muezzin, in a loud and solemn voice, calls the faithful to evening prayers. After hastily reciting a verse from the Koran, every one begins to eat. Many of the lower classes carry bread, or a few dates, or the like, about with them. At such a moment they become demonstrative and are too excited to stand on ceremony." —*Algeria as It Is.*

None are exempted from the fast except children, the sick, or the very aged, and the time of fasting is defined in the Koran as "so long as it is possible to distinguish a white thread from a black one." The strain of this long abstinence upon the physique is naturally a very severe one, and it is said that during Ramadân more quarrels and fights take place among the Arabs, than during any other month in the year. A pilgrimage to Mecca, the birth-place of Mahomet, is also enjoined on his followers at least once in a life-time, and many Arabs make numerous pilgrimages to the holy spot.

The moral teaching of the Koran inculcates the practice of just dealing, of patience under trial, humility, truthfulness, and forgiveness of injuries. It appoints Friday as a day to be set apart for special prayer, since on that day God completed his work of creation, but a cessation of labour is not commanded.

It concerns itself very minutely in the domestic affairs of the faithful, encouraging both polygamy and slavery, but otherwise providing for a tolerably fair administration of justice, borrowed in a great measure from the Jewish model, as are also many rules of personal conduct, which Mahomet impressed upon his followers. The use of intoxicating liquors and games of chance are forbidden. Altogether, there can be no doubt that the religion which Mahomet taught, was an infinitely purer and better one than that which prevailed among the Arabs before his time, while at the same time we cannot forget that under his laws, murder is accounted no great crime, that hatred against all unbelievers is expressly commanded, and that purity of life, and charity, such as the Gospel preaches, are unknown.

In conclusion, we quote a summary of the effects of Islamism, from Sir W. Muir's "Life of Mahomet:"—

"What have been the effects of the system which Mahomet left behind him? We may freely concede that it banished for ever many of the darker elements of superstition. Idolatry vanished before the battle-cry of Islam; the doctrine of the unity and infinite perfections of God, and of a special all-pervading Providence, became a living principle in the hearts and lives of the followers of Mahomet, even as in his own. An absolute surrender and submission to the Divine will (the idea conveyed by the very name of Islam) was demanded as the first requirement of the religion.

"Nor are the social virtues wanting. Brotherly love is inculcated towards all within the circle of the faith; infanticide is proscribed;

orphans are to be protected, and slaves treated with consideration; intoxicating drinks are forbidden, and Mahometanism may boast of a degree of temperance unknown to any other creed.

"Yet these benefits have been purchased at a costly price. Setting aside considerations of minor import, three radical evils flow from the faith in all ages and in every country, and must continue to flow so long as the Corân is the standard of belief. (1st) Polygamy, divorce, and slavery are maintained and perpetuated, striking at the root of public morals, poisoning domestic life and disorganizing society. (2nd) Freedom of thought, and private judgment in religion, are crushed and annihilated. The sword still is and must remain the inevitable penalty for the renunciation of Islam; toleration is unknown. (3rd) A barrier has been interposed against the reception of Christianity. They labour under a miserable delusion, who suppose that Mahometanism paves the way for a purer faith. No system could have been devised with more consummate skill, for shutting out the nations over which it has swayed, from the light of truth. *Idolatrous* Arabia (judging from the analogy of other nations) might have been aroused to spiritual life and to the adoption of the faith of Jesus; *Mahometan* Arabia is to the human eye sealed against the benign influences of the gospel. Many a flourishing land in Africa and in Asia, which once rejoiced in the light and liberty of Christianity, is now overspread by gross darkness and barbarism. It is as if their day of grace had come and gone, and there remained to them no more sacrifice for sins. That a brighter day will yet dawn on these countries we may not doubt, but the history of the past, and the condition of the present, are not the less sad and true. The sword of Mahomet and the Corân are the most stubborn enemies of civilization, liberty, and truth which the world has yet known."

Attached to the Grand Mosque is the superior court of the Muphti, where appeals are made from the lower court—that of the Cadi. In the Rue de la Marine is one of the great casernes, or barracks, formerly occupied by the janissaries, and now devoted to the use of their modern representatives, the Turcos. With regard to these barracks we read in Pierre Dan's history—

"There are in the city nine large houses called casernes, serving for the dwellings of the janissaries, and though they have such numerous inhabitants, the houses are so clean that no manner of dirt is to be

found in them, several slaves being continually occupied in cleansing them, as the Turks are very particular on this point."

Each janissary, we are told by another writer, had a Christian boy as slave, to wait on him and keep his arms and dwelling in order. At the end of the Rue de la Marine, where it joins the Boulevard, is what French guide-books designate as a *pâté*, of beautiful old Arab houses, the last remains of the lower Moorish town. Some of them are used as government offices, while others are wrecked and hanging in mid-air almost by a thread—soon to make way for modern French buildings.

CHAPTER XI.

THE ARAB TOWN.

"Lasciate ogni speranza voi che 'ntrate."
Dante.

IT is scarcely possible to imagine a greater contrast than exists between the new and the old town of Algiers—the French and the Arab; the difference in truth, being only a type of the vast gulf that lies between the life and thought and manners of the two races—the one all excitement, bustle, and show, the other as opposedly solemn, silent, and self-contained.

A turn of a street turns the page of history back a thousand years; and but a dozen paces separate the life of the pushing, driving, money-making nineteenth century, from the romantic, half-savage, wholly mysterious world of Haroun-Al-Raschid.

In the French town the Arab certainly *is*. He forms the picturesque item in the commonplace picture. He walks the broad pavement before the long rows of many-windowed houses; he jostles the Parisienne in her jauntiest bonnet, and elbows the trim French soldier; he patronizes the modern invention of the omnibus, and possesses himself of the sunny corners of the street as lounging-places; but

in all he is an anomaly and a stranger—he has no real part in the life which is lived amid open squares, and in streets of plate-glass-fronted windows.

But cross the road. Make your way but a dozen yards up the steep incline on which the city leans, and you will find yourself in a new world—in a world in which you, with your modern ideas and in your modern dress, feel yourself to be the anomaly—in a world where you will find the Arab at home, such to all intents and purposes as he was in the days of Moorish grandeur or Turkish tyranny—such as he will never cease to be while his race and religion endure.

"Between the two towns there is no barrier other than that of defiance and antipathy, which exists between the two races. But that suffices to separate them. They touch, they live in the closest neighbourhood, without associating or having anything in common but their vices."—*Une Année dans le Sahel.*

The Arab town will be found intensely interesting to all lovers of the picturesque, and especially to those to whom this strange Eastern life is a novelty. It possesses besides, another advantage in the perfect security with which strangers, even ladies, may penetrate into its mazy labyrinths, and the respectful politeness with which they will at all times find themselves treated.

At every turn the most charming little pictures, the most taking *coups d'œil* present themselves.

"There sits Alnaschar, dreaming in the sun over his basket of trumpery glass-ware, with his arms out at elbows, his grey cotton pantaloons in rags, and his shabby slippers hanging off from the heels; he looks a good-for-nothing fellow enough, and quite answering to the account of his immortal brother the barber. In a moment he will rouse

himself, kick his imaginary wife—the Vizier's daughter—and one feels tempted to wait and see the amusement of his industrious neighbour.

"*He* is no dreamer, that tailor, it is certain. As he sits cross-legged in his little shop, built like an oven in the wall, no machine works quicker than his nimble fingers with needle and gold thread; and if he gossips now and then, it is only to take breath. And, lo! there is the shop of poor Bedreddin Hassan, the brother-in-law of Noureddin Ali and the bridegroom of the Queen of Beauty, who, by the force of mysterious circumstances, became an alien and a pastrycook. He is handsome, prince-like, and melancholy, as we imagine him; but a pleasant smell of hot cheese-cakes reaches the nose—those very cheese-cakes by which he is restored to his dignities and his bride.

"A step farther, and we meet Morgiana bound to the apothecary's—a well-knit, superb woman, half negress, half Moor. What a dignified gait she has! what a self-possession! what a look of resoluteness in her handsome black eye! She is wrapt from head to foot in a bright blue cotton shawl, having a single strip of crimson silk embroidery inserted across the shoulders; and in this simple dress she has something of Greek statuesqueness. A profusion of silver chains, bracelets, and anklets, adorns her fine limbs, thus testifying to the liberality of the master she serves so thoroughly.

"Surely the leader of those mischievous young urchins must be Aladdin! There are half-a-score of them playing around a fountain, all as ragged, as impish, and as dirty as can be; they cover you with dust, they splash you with water, they drive you against the wall—yet there is something in their frolicsomeness that forbids anger.

"It is a comfort to think that the sinister old man watching them over the way may be the African magician, whose wonderful lamp will lead to Aladdin's wealth untold, and himself to destruction."—*A Winter with the Swallows.*

We pass from the gay French town, always upwards, through the Jewish quarter, which lies as a kind of neutral ground between the two worlds, "and from thence" says Fromentin—

"One can glance into the hidden life of old Algiers, to be reached by that maze of strange steep alleys, which are like so many mysterious staircases leading to silence.

"Streets like defiles, dark and often vaulted; houses without windows; doors which you must stoop to enter; shops like cupboards,

where the merchandise is heaped pell-mell, as though the vendor feared to expose it; industries without use; mosques hidden away out of sight; baths which are entered mysteriously; a confused, compact mass of masonry, built like a sepulchre, where life seems stifled and laughter would be out of place—such is the strange city where dwell, or rather perish, a people who, though never so powerful as some assert, were at least rich, active, and enterprising. But it is a sepulchre, and nothing more. The Arab thinks that he lives in his white city. He but buries himself there, shrouded in an inaction which exhausts him, overwhelmed by the very silence in which he delights, enveloped in reticence, and dying of languor.

"His town is a significant emblem of himself. He is immovable. With all possible inducements to innovation, he has retained his customs, his superstitions, his dress, and his religion. Pressed on all sides by an invading European colony, strangled, one might say, by military and police regulations, but voluntarily shut out from the movement of events, an enemy to all progress, indifferent even to the destiny which may be awaiting himself, without commerce and almost without industry, he subsists in virtue of his immobility on the very verge of ruin."—*Une Année dans le Sahel.*

The picture so drawn is a melancholy one, but it is certainly true that both the Arab himself and his city do produce a peculiarly sad impression upon the mind.

The personal dignity of the Arab, his solemnity of manner, his courageous piety, his poverty, his very impassiveness, touch us with a feeling of admiration for him, of compunction at his changed estate. We come to look upon him, almost in spite of ourselves, as a dethroned and outraged prince. We seem inclined, momentarily, to forget that his good days were days of barbarism, of lawlessness, of all manner of cruelty and wanton oppression—that the evil days upon which he has fallen are days of civilization and good government—we can only remember that strangers, whose race and religion he hates, are masters of his land, that he is conquered and despoiled.

And this feeling is peculiarly present with us, as we climb

the steep and narrow alleys of the old Moorish city, where behind whitewashed walls and grated loop-holes, the Arab lives his hidden life. We see a veiled figure standing before a low, brass-studded door. We linger as we pass, hoping for some revelation of the inner life of the house's occupants; but the jealous door opens but a few inches, discloses but a momentary glimpse of marble-pillared courtyard, and falls back again of its own weight; and only the blank whitewashed wall stares into our faces.

"The private life of the Arab is lost in impenetrable mystery. All is shadowy in these singular dwellings, where the master of the house plays the rôle of jailer, and behind whose barred windows and closed doors, lie the two secrets of this strange country—women and native wealth. Of the one as of the other, we know actually nothing. Money can scarcely be said to circulate; women are scarcely ever seen; a muslin curtain before a lattice that the wind raises—a curiously formed flower-vase filled with blossom that bespeaks a woman's hand—these vaguest hints are all we have of the beauties of whose mysterious charms we dream."—*Une Année dans le Sahel.*

It is excessively difficult to find one's way about the Arab town. It is built so very irregularly, with so many twists and turnings and blind alleys, that a straight course is an absolute impossibility.

"Suppose for a moment that a new Dædalus had been charged to build a city on the model of his famous labyrinth—the result of his work would have produced the old town of Algiers."—*L'Algérie. Berbrugger.*

The architect of the Moorish city, whoever he may have been, certainly had sympathy with dame Nature in this, that he did not love straight lines; but though in making one's way about it, one is almost sure to be after a few moments irretrievably lost, as in a maze, one simple rule

holds good: go up, and in time you will surely find yourself at the Kasba; go down, and you will as certainly regain the quay. Meanwhile, wander up and down and in and out of the strange, quaint, crooked, silent alleys—you

Arab Street.

will scarcely go amiss, for at each turn you will come upon some new object of beauty or interest, though it may only be an Arab woman carrying her pitcher Rebecca-like to the well, or a doorway quaintly carved and moulded.

A little "bit," which is recommended to invalids or those

to whom mounting is a fatigue, is to be found by passing from the Place du Gouvernement through one of the arcades, where Moorish goods are exposed for sale, crossing the Place Malakoff, and taking the small street which ascends left of the cathedral. On the left, you will pass one or two handsome old entries worth observing, and turning immediately to the left by a narrow passage, will reach the Impasse of St. Vincent de Paul, one of the prettiest and most characteristic streets of old Algiers. The tall houses projecting story above story, almost but not quite touching, fit into one another like the pieces of a Chinese puzzle; the low doorways are delicately carved and moulded, and the doors themselves, of cedar-wood, enriched and ornamented with ancient brass-work.

This passage leads directly upon the broad flight of stone steps at the top of which, on Place Randon, is the synagogue. Cross the Jewish quarter, pass in front of the synagogue, and follow the windings of the narrow and steep little street to the right of it called Rue Staouëli.

At No. 20 of this street is a picturesque Arab café well worthy of a visit. Turn left into Rue Sidi-Abdullah. You are now in the heart of the old Arab town, and find a dozen objects on this side and that, to attract your interest and attention, but it will be well, perhaps, if, resisting manifold temptations to wander, the traveller who is taking his first walk through old Algiers, should turn out of the Rue Sidi-Abdullah, down beneath a narrow gateway named above 1ère Impasse Rue Kleber. This, after one or two twists and turns, will bring him through a curious Moorish bazaar into the Rue Kleber, and is, perhaps, altogether the most striking route that he can follow.

The charm of the place must be felt to be appreciated. On one side the M'zabite's shining black face looks out from a bower of vegetables and fruit, on another the Moor sits gravely cross-legged on his shelf, busied with the gold embroidery of slippers and waist-belts; here is a cupboard-shop filled with dates, oranges, and crockery of such shapes as the old Etruscans or the buried Pompeian people might have used, moulded of coarsest earthenware; there a group of Arab tailors embroidering the bernous, each with the silk thread wound round the outstretched great toe of the bare brown foot; here a couple of Arab women haggling under their veils over the price of a string of beads; there a *café maure*, where rows of grave turbaned Moors sit cross-legged on matted shelves or languidly play draughts upon the floor. All is picturesque, strange, and Eastern, and has for the European new to such surroundings, a marvellous fascination.

In Rue Kleber, besides a grand Arab café, is a mosque, and in the adjoining street another—the only ones in the Arab town—not very different in character from those on the quay, but much smaller, and frequented apparently by the poorer sort of people. Attached to one of these mosques is a large Arab school, such as may be met with in various parts of the old city. The open door, and the ceaseless sound of monotonous chanting that reverberates in the deep silence of the streets, make you at once aware of it.

Looking in, a grave turbaned man will be seen seated cross-legged on a mat, surrounded by a congregation of little boys, each cross-legged too, with a small board held before him on which is written the lesson for the day. The pro-

cess of teaching is somewhat peculiar. The master first reads the lesson in a loud voice, the scholars repeat it after him, and go on repeating it, as it seems, indefinitely in a monotonous sing-song, their bodies swaying to and fro the whole time, in measure to the chant. The education given at these schools consists chiefly in learning to read, but more often stops short of this accomplishment, and is confined to the commital to memory of certain passages of the Koran. This education is of course enjoyed only by boys —the women are utterly ignorant. There was formerly some provision for the higher education of the Arab in Algiers. Old writers, Dan and Peyssonnel, speak of the Arab colleges which existed in their time, in which such abstruse sciences as grammar, rhetoric, logic, theology, metaphysics, astrology, medicine, arithmetic, and divination were taught.

The late curator of the Bibliothèque tells us—

"In the full tide of Algerian power these establishments were numerous, rich, and well provided with manuscripts. Our military expeditions have put an end to them by destroying the greater proportion of the books which enriched them. Some remains of these literary treasures, saved from destruction by the friends of science, are in the Bibliothèque at Algiers, but the greater number are for ever lost—used, probably, to light the camp fires of our soldiery."—*L'Algérie. Berbrugger.*

The revenues of these higher schools have also been absorbed by the Government, and go towards the support of the excellent French and Arab college for the joint education of French and native lads.

It is curious to read the description given of Algiers by travellers of the olden time, and to observe how in almost every particular their accounts still hold true.

"All the streets are narrower than the narrowest lanes of Grenada or Lisbon—wide enough for a man on horseback to pass, but not two persons side by side. In short, the houses of this town are so crowded and pressed together, that they resemble more than anything else a loaf of kneaded bread."—*Topografia de Argel*, 1612. *Haedo.*

"No one is allowed to wear a sword in Algiers (1642), on account of the narrowness of the streets, which makes such a custom dangerous." —*Captivité de M. d'Aranda.*

"The streets are so excessively narrow that in some, two persons can scarcely walk abreast each other. This strange style of building is thought to arise from its affording a better shade, and more protection in case of earthquakes. From the streets being concave and rising on each side, the greatest inconvenience arises both to men and animals, and when a Moor passes on horseback you are obliged to get close up to the houses to prevent being trampled under foot."—*Pananti. Residence in Algiers*, 1812.

The description thus given, applies equally well to-day to that quaintly beautiful part of the city which is known as the Arab town, within which charmed enclosure, though its boundaries are circumscribed day by day, the hand of the innovator has as yet made no very glaring impression.

Two modern improvements, however, there certainly are in the old-world spot: one of them the introduction of gas, with which the whole town is now well lighted, and which seems at once to drag it from barbarism into the pale of civilization; and another the naming and numbering of the streets.

That this is to some extent a benefit may be gleaned from the description given by a French traveller of Tunis at the present day:—

"The streets having no names, the houses no numbers, and all parts of the city forming labyrinths with ten times as many blind-alleys as there are thoroughfares, great practice is necessary not to lose oneself in the inextricable network. If this is the case by day, it may be imagined how difficult it is to find our way in the unlighted streets at

night. A traveller must provide himself with a guide when he wishes to penetrate into the remote arteries of the city."

Such until the French occupation was Algiers, and an evening walk through the streets, was a matter not only of difficulty but of danger.

In the old days of the Regency the streets, we read, were—

"Shut with gates at night, and any one found walking in them after dark, unless he is able to give a very good account of himself, is seized and put in prison. The next day he is taken before the Divan or Cadi, and if the captive is not able to pay a tolerably good sum for his ransom, this encounter is likely to cost him from one to two hundred lashes, which he can only avoid by emptying his purse, so true is it that here, as elsewhere, gold and silver are powerful advocates."—*Histoire de Barbarie. Pierre Dan.*

The streets have been named by the French authorities with more zeal than discretion, and the nomenclature is such a wonderful jumble of tongues, that it seems as though the task had been allotted to the original inhabitants of the tower of Babel.

The bright blue mottoes of modern names on the old white houses look curiously out of place, having almost the effect of a mummy adorned with a stylish Parisian *coiffure;* and they are also apt to be somewhat misleading at times, since the *impasses* are as often as not quite passable, while the *rues* and the *passages* sometimes lure the unwary into a *cul-de-sac*, or blind alley.

"In Arab times very few streets possessed any names at all. It was sufficient to an Arab to know his own house, as a bird his nest or a beast his lair; he had no special desire that others should be acquainted with the place of his dwelling. At the same time some of the larger and more important streets had gradually come to have certain titles, or different parts of the same street were known by the names of the various trades which were carried on in them, as, for

instance, from a baker's oven, *kouchet;* a gate, *bab;* a windmill, *feurn;* a mosque, *Djama;* a fountain, *aïn;* a market, *fondouck;* a bath, *hammam;* a house, *dar.*

"European customs, very soon after the conquest, modified and altered this state of affairs, and a few of the Arabic names were retained or were attempted to be retained, but they have been for the most part so utterly travestied, that but very little of the original appellation remains—for instance, the street El Ackdar, the Green, has become Rue Locdor; Souk-ed-Djama, the Market of the Mosque, Rue Socgemah; Aïn es Sabath, the Fountain of the Arch, Rue du Sabbat." —*Itinéraire de l'Algérie. Piesse.*

The Arabic names thus ingeniously Europeanised, have the double advantage of presenting equal difficulties to both natives and strangers, and the European names are, of course, a dead letter so far as the natives are concerned; so that any attempt at asking the route or finding any particular street in the Arab town is a work of difficulty.

Very few of the residents in the upper town speak any French; a smattering of Italian is, indeed, more likely to be found useful among the Arabs, since it approaches more nearly that *lingua franca*, or medley of European tongues, which before the French conquest, was the ordinary medium of intercourse between the natives and the civilized world, and which is not yet wholly forgotten. Besides which it seems as though the Arab had an instinctive preference for anything *not* French.

Leading out of the Rue Kleber is the curious and picturesque Rue Sydney Smith—why so named it would be difficult to say. Indeed, the nomenclature of the Arab streets is altogether remarkable.

"Mythology has contributed the names of Hercules, Medea, the Hydra, Sphynx, and Sagittarius; history the names of Hannibal, Cleopatra, Pompey, Scipio, Juba, Belisarius, together with Ximenes,

Charles V., Doria, Napoleon, Kleber, Philippe d'Orléans, and other sovereigns and generals. After these come the historians Sallust and Marmol, the geographers Ptolemy and Bruce, and the poet Cervantes, who was himself a slave in Algiers."—*L'Itinéraire de l'Algérie. Piesse.*

"Will posterity," asks M. Piesse, "imagine that these worthies were the builders and founders of the Arab streets and lanes, or will they find insoluble enigmas and found wild theories on these curious complications?"

Not only does history furnish its contingent of names for the Arab labyrinths, but geography and natural history are equally called upon for contributions, and the celebrated cities of the modern and ancient world cross angles with "the cat," "the lion," "the gazelle," "the panther," "the lizard," "the eagle," "the swan," and "the bear."

One street, as curious as its name, is the Rue du Diable, which leads out of the Rue de la Casbah, and with its vaulted roofing and deep shadows is a favourite "bit" for artists.

The last-named street, Rue de la Casbah, which goes through the Arab town from the Rue Bab-el-Oued to the citadel, is the most direct, though by no means the most interesting road to the Kasba. It climbs the hill in a tolerably straight line of four hundred and ninety-seven steps, and was at one time the chief thoroughfare of Algiers. Several glaringly French houses have been built in it, and it is interesting rather from the charming costumes, and groups of figures which may be seen clustered here and there, at the cafés or before the fountains, than for any special beauty of its own.

A word must be said about the fountains, which form so many centres of Arab street scenes.

In the early days of the Moorish city the water was supplied only by great cisterns attached to each house, where the rain-water was stored, and which are mentioned by nearly all old travellers as curiosities; but Pierre Dan, writing in 1640, says—

"There are more than a hundred fountains in the city, all made during the last twenty-five years, and supplied with water by means of an aqueduct. It may well be believed that these works have caused much sweat and suffering to the poor captive Christians, who through all the violent heat have been compelled to labour at them, as well as at the mole of the port, as they still do."

These aqueducts, four in number, at which the Christian slaves toiled, are still in use, and supply the numerous fountains at which the people congregate with their classical copper jugs.

There used to be an old law in Algiers that every one who came to the fountain must take his turn, except the Jew, and he was compelled to wait until all present—Turks, Moors, or Christians—were served, so that it sometimes happens, we are told, "that the Jew has to wait a full half-hour before he can dare to fill his vessel."

At length, after many turnings, twistings, and strayings, we, who are taking our first walk through old Algiers, emerge from the network of silent white-walled lanes on to the open space—the space which French devastation has made open and very ruinous-looking—in front of the ancient Kasba. Just outside the gateway is a pretty little mosque, now converted into a Roman Catholic church—the Church of la Sainte Croix. The Kasba itself—the historic citadel of Algiers—is now used only as a barrack, and has suffered considerably at the hands of the French, a road having been made

through the centre of it, and its fortifications demolished, while numerous ungainly-looking official and military erections, cover the garden once sacred to the ladies of the Dey's household. This fortress, situated on the highest

The Kasba.

point of the city, dates back to the time of Barbarossa, who, in 1516, began the works on this spot on the site of a still older building. Haedo, giving a description of it in 1612, mentions its defences as not being very formidable, the fort

being at that time furnished only with eight guns of small calibre, and guarded by sixty janissaries, who, most of them married, had separate establishments for their women within the precincts. At this time the chief residence of the Dey was in the lower part of the town, in the palace of Djenina, destroyed since the French occupation. But gradually the fortifications of the Kasba were strengthened, its buildings extended, and finally it was separated from the town by a solid rampart, which exists to the present day. In fact it became a formidable stronghold, and in 1818 Ali-ben-Ahmed, then Dey, was thankful to retire within it, from the intrigues and rebellions of his troublesome *corps de garde* —the janissaries—who were in the habit of assassinating one day the unhappy ruler whom they had set up the preceding. It is said that the treasure transported by Ali to the Kasba amounted to upwards of twelve millions sterling.

From this time till 1830 the Kasba continued to be the royal residence of the Deys, and almost their prison, since Ali's successor, Hussein, the last of the Algerian potentates, never ventured more than on two occasions during his twelve years' reign, to leave the sheltering walls of the citadel. Here the Dey would sit for several hours every day cross-legged on a scarlet-covered bench, with an umbrella held over him by way of insignia, and surrounded by his Divan, to administer the affairs of the State. Here he would hear causes, decide quarrels, and deal out justice, or injustice, as the case might be, in patriarchal style. Any one in the land might make an appeal to the supreme ruler from the tribunal of the Cadi or Muphti; the form of which appeal was to seize the great chain which still hangs over the ancient iron-plated door of the Kasba. Any

criminal or worsted suitor who laid hold of the chain obtained an audience of the Dey, but if unable to establish his right or innocence, the bastinado was added to his other pains and penalties.

High above the old doorway is a carved wooden Moorish gallery, where, in the time of the Regency, the banner by day and the beacon by night were displayed, and where the Dey would occasionally show himself to his loving subjects. In the place of the modern gateway was a great aviary of pigeons. The walls to the right of the old door, which enclosed the private apartments of the Dey, still preserve their double rows of small prison-like windows.

Indeed, the palace altogether must have been a terribly gloomy place, if we may judge by the description given of it in 1830 by a French officer (Baron Denniée) who was with the troops when they entered:—

"The citadel of the *Casaubah*, residence of the Dey, and the place where he stored away his treasure, is at the summit of the triangle formed by the town which the fortress dominates. It seems as if the spirit of the Algerine Government was imprinted on the very walls of its stronghold. The *Casaubah* menaced Algiers more than it protected her, and formed a fortress within a fortress in the form of a triangle, like the city itself.

"Outside, the *Casaubah* presented to the astonished gaze of our soldiers, an irregular enclosure formed by walls of astonishing height and of excessive whiteness, without doors or windows, with battlements of the Moorish fashion, from which protruded, from deep irregular embrasures, long cannons pointed in every direction and painted red. The entrance is by a dark archway, in the centre of which is a marble fountain. This porch, roughly decorated with red and blue lines, was the advanced post where the negroes who latterly formed the body-guard of the Dey were posted.

"The door passed, a narrow lane conducted on one side to the powder-magazine, and on the other to the inner court where the Dey resided. This court, paved with marble, was square, and had on three sides of it galleries supported by spiral marble columns. Under one of

these galleries was a kind of throne or bench covered with scarlet cloth, where the Dey sometimes sat.

"It was in this court that merchants were obliged to deposit the cargoes of their vessels, so that the Dey should be able to choose for himself the percentage in kind which was his due and custom. This primitive fashion of levying taxes caused the courtyard to be constantly heaped up with all manner of goods, so that it had the appearance of an old curiosity shop. In one of the galleries on the first story was a sort of pavilion in which the Dey would sit to hear music, and at the back of which were three or four little rooms, furnished apparently only with horse trappings. On the first story was a long gallery looking over the town, and from this a kind of ladder staircase led to the upper gallery, out of which opened four long chambers, whitewashed, and without either mirrors or hangings. These were the private apartments of the Dey.

"From the upper gallery a door incredibly low led to the women's quarter, which consisted of six small rooms, shut in by very high walls.

"These apartments had no light except from an inner court, the soil of which was up to the level of the first floor.

"This melancholy abode, which suggested a vulture's eyrie rather than a lady's bower, was protected on the one side, by cannon which commanded the mountains in the direction of the Fort de l'Empereur, and on the other—that is to say on the side of the principal courtyard—by a very thick wall. This wall had been in one or two places slit diagonally, so as to form a sort of loop-hole, through which a glimpse of that portion of the upper gallery where the Dey was accustomed to sit might be caught by the captives, and a passing glance now and then obtained of the being who was, or was supposed to be, the sole subject of all their thoughts.

"In the neighbourhood of this gloomy and unsanctified cloister was an open space, or rather pit, dignified by the name of garden, which could only be reached by a pathway twisted into a kind of labyrinth, and by descending a flight of sixty to eighty steps. This garden, dug out between high walls of dazzling whiteness, was the only breathing-place permitted to the ladies."—*Précis Historique de la Campagne d'Afrique.*

From this description of the Dey's private apartments, it is to be imagined that the clocks and mirrors with which the Dey's rooms were chiefly furnished, had been removed before the entrance of the French troops into the citadel.

The interior of the Kasba can be visited on application. Enter the gate and ring a bell under a portico to the right. Permission to look over the citadel will at once be granted, and a soldier appointed as guide.

It is well worthy a visit, even under present circumstances. The old Mosque of the Dey, a large and handsome building, is now used as the artillery barracks, and the minaret which formerly adorned it has been pulled down. The hall of audience is a military store-room; the private apartments are used as kitchen and mess-room by the officers; but all are willingly shown to strangers, and are not only interesting from their historical associations, but rich in marbles and sculptured doorways.

The curious pavilion mentioned by Baron Denniée, and which was the scene of the momentous slap in the face given by Hussein Dey to the French consul, is still to be seen. It is lined with crimson and adorned with small mirrors, and has somewhat the appearance of an old family coach without wheels.

The view from the Dey's apartments, and, indeed, from any part of the Kasba, is very beautiful. The whole of Algiers down to the shore is spread out to the view, and the peculiar construction of the houses gives to this bird's-eye prospect, a very much more pleasing effect than is usually obtained over a city. Here are no tiles and gaunt chimney-pots, no irregular blocks of dingy red and grey, nothing but a succession of gleaming white terraces, that descend like a broad flight of marble steps into the blue water of the bay, while beyond, the two jetties clasp the port like a pair of embracing arms.

The flat roofs give to Algiers a peculiarly Eastern appear-

ance. They were, and are still to a certain extent, appropriated by the female portion of the inhabitants. Indeed, during the Dey's rule, it was forbidden, under pain of death, for any man to go on the terrace of even his own house during daylight. From this rule the consuls of the friendly nations were alone excepted.

"But out of courtesy they never availed themselves of this privilege, or at least not during the hour before sunset, when the Algerine belles take their evening promenade, and exhibit themselves and their jewels to their fair neighbours, until the instant when the evening prayer at the mosque ceases; then, their noisy leave-taking, and the clattering of their half slippers as they hurry down to welcome home their lords, may be heard from one end of the city to the other.

"These terraces are all surrounded by walls higher than people's heads. They are provided with one or two sets of portable steps or ladders, and offer no impediment to the neighbourly intercourse of ladies residing in the immediate vicinity of one another; nor is the division of a street of much more consequence in preventing their near approach, as there are, I should think, but very few spots in Algiers where even a child could not shake hands across the street from one house to another."—*Six Years in Algiers*, 1806—12. *Mrs. Broughton.*

The sanctuary of the roof is no longer inviolable, but it is still the resort of the Algerine women, and towards sunset, glimpses of pretty faces and gay costumes may yet be had, by those who wander up to the top of the old town. The Algerian women, moreover, are not, as a rule, careful to conceal their charms from the eyes of the European if Arabs are not present; whether the feeling that prompts them is a kindly consideration for the stranger's prejudices, a struggle towards liberty, or utter contempt, it is hard to say. Any way, a walk through the Arab quarter is strongly recommended towards the hour of sunset, when the rich afternoon lights are very beautiful, and the native population at their gayest.

But, above all, a visit should be paid to the old town in the evening—if possible by moonlight, when the effect of the whole is simply bewitching. Weird and ghostlike in its alternate gleam and gloom, in its utter stillness, it is like some shadow-city of enchantment, whose life has been lived out centuries ago, and is peopled only by pale shades clad in white and glistening garments, who glide mysteriously through the mazy defiles, and disappear suddenly in the black darkness.

CHAPTER XII.

THE MUSEUM.—THE HARBOUR.—THE FORTIFICATIONS.—THE GATES.

"Cooped in their winged sea-girt citadel."
Byron.

JUST beneath the flight of stone steps which lead from the Place du Gouvernement to the Fish-market, is a modest entry adorned with a somewhat high-sounding title. It is "L'Exposition permanente des produits de l'Algérie." It occupies a series of vaults beneath the Boulevard, and is open to the public on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays.

This museum is, as it professes to be, a collection of all the products of Algeria, and though somewhat neglected, will be found well worthy of one, if not more visits. It is well arranged in its different departments, and conveys a good idea of the richness of the Algerine soil both as regards minerals and vegetable life, the variety of climates which may be found within the boundaries of the country, and the various possibilities open to enterprise and capital.

In the mineral collection will be found copper, iron, plumbago, lead, manganese, rock-salt, gypsum, slate, antimony, marbles of the most varied and beautiful shades, onyx, &c.

The vegetable kingdom offers specimens of magnificent cedar-wood, cork-oak—with which valuable tree it is said

that more than a million acres in Algeria are covered—and other varieties, including the evergreen and the chestnut-leaved oak, the pine, cypress, olive, ash, juniper, elm, carouba, &c.

The zoological department contains stuffed specimens of all the principal wild animals of the country—the lion, panther, hyæna, jackal, wild cat, monkey, &c., together with an interesting collection of birds, among which the ostrich holds a prominent place.

The specimens in the "Exposition" of the native industries are no less interesting than the natural museum. The Kabyle pottery and jewellery are especially attractive, and some of the gold embroidery is extremely beautiful. There are some very good specimens of Moorish carpets and all varieties of stuff used for native clothing. In the entrance-hall of the museum was originally placed a pedestal of Algerian onyx, supporting a bust of Napoleon III., but this has been removed. In a glass case, there is still preserved the trowel used by the Empress for the foundation-stone of the Boulevard, which no longer bears her name.

The HARBOUR of Algiers possesses a small history entirely to itself, or rather plays a very important part in the history of the town. Some kind of a port doubtless existed here in Roman and Berber times, although no trace of ancient masonry has been found; but the harbour offered, until comparatively modern times, very insecure anchorage for the pirate galleys, and in rough weather they had to be dragged out of the water on to the shore. The works of the harbour, such as we see them at present, were not begun until the sixteenth century by the pirate chieftain, Kheir-ed-din Barbarossa. The name by which the town

of Algiers was known in the Middle Ages, and by which it is still called by the Arabs, is El-Djezaïr (the islands). It is curious that not only has the name become, in the course of ages, so modified as to be scarcely recognisable, but the islands themselves which suggested it, have disappeared. They were four in number, lying closely together in front of the city, at a distance of about two hundred yards from the shore.

In the year 1302, the Spaniards becoming uneasy at the depredations of the Algerine pirates, sent four vessels to reconnoitre this part of the coast, and they then took possession of one of the small islands which faced the city; but it was not until nearly two hundred years later, after the expulsion of the Moors from Spain, that the Count de Navarre with his Spanish soldiers, sweeping over the country from Oran, dictated terms to the Algerines, and in order to hold them in check, built the famous fortress on the island at the mouth of the harbour, which was afterwards known as La Peñon (page 86).

"This was so near the walls of the town that with their arquebuses the Spaniards could reach those within; and with their field pieces they could actually make breaches in the fortifications."—*Description of Africa by Giovanni Leone*, 1556.

From this rocky stronghold the Spaniards for twenty years overawed the Algerines, depriving them of the use of their harbour, and keeping them in a state of humiliating subjection—a very thorn in their side. It was for the purpose of relieving himself of this incubus, that the unfortunate Emir, Selem-ben-Teumi, asked the good services of the Lesbos pirates, the brothers Barbarossa, and so lost both his kingdom and his life (page 84).

After the capture of the Peñon, Kheir-ed-din Barbarossa set himself seriously to the task of forming a safe riding for the Algerine galleys. He began what in his day and country were certainly enormous undertakings, and which were probably regarded by the pious Mussulmans as a very tempting of Providence. He undertook to alter the face of nature for his convenience; the islands, he decreed, that had so long given shelter and support to the infidel, should no longer exist. They should become a part of the mainland. Setting to work the thirty thousand unfortunate Christian slaves whom he held in his power, the pirate-king conceived and executed the grand idea of uniting the four islets, and joining the island thus made, to the mainland by a great mole, which should protect the galleys from the north.

For the construction of the mole, materials were at hand. Besides the Spanish fortress, the old Roman city of Rusgania strewed the shore near Cape Matifou with great blocks of stone and marble. These were all brought into requisition, and in the space of three years El-Djezaïr, the island city, was but a misnomer—the mole, with the group of islets to which it was attached, lying out on the blue sea in the form of a gigantic anchor, as though it grappled the city of the rovers to the shore.

Kheir-ed-din did not attempt to fortify his harbour; he thought only of securing his ships from the power of the sea. Possibly it did not occur to him, now that the vantage-ground of the islets was removed, that a foreign enemy would dare to beard the beast of prey in his den. With his good ships at safe anchorage, he, the pirate-king—admiral too, of the Turkish fleet—would willingly have set the outer world at defiance.

His successor, Hassen, however, judged it advisable to strengthen the seaward defences of the town; and he erected the first batteries on what was then, and still is, known as "the island." The lighthouse-tower is part of the old fortification, built by this pasha in 1544. It is octagonal in form, about one hundred and twenty feet above the level of the sea, and can be seen at a distance of fifteen miles.

In the reign of Salah-er-Raïs the work of Kheir-ed-din received some important additions; a new wall, built of enormous blocks of stone, was laid all along the mole to protect the port still further from the severe northern tempests.

But during the winter of 1592-3 a severe storm not only destroyed many of the vessels, but also broke away a considerable part of the works of the harbour.

"This disaster furnished an excuse for the rapacious Pacha Kader to satisfy his cupidity at the expense of his predecessor. Being elected pacha at Constantinople, and sent to replace Mustapha, he obliged the disgraced governor to pay a sum amounting to four thousand pounds, on the pretext of the port having been allowed to fall into disrepair. It need scarcely be said that, after the fashion of Eastern officials, he pocketed the money."—*L'Algérie. M. Berbrugger.*

Twenty-three years later Mustapha was lucky enough to be appointed governor in the place of Kader.

A fine opportunity for the settling of old scores had come. Mustapha lost no time in representing, that the money paid for the repair of the harbour had not been used for the purpose, that it was still in a dilapidated condition, or rather that it was in so much worse case than he had left it a score of years before, that it would require a much larger sum to be expended upon it, than would have restored

it at that period. Mustapha consequently seized upon the person and goods of the deposed pasha, and eventually only released him, on his payment of a sum just double that of which he had mulcted Mustapha, on his accession to power.

The following is a description of the harbour of Algiers, written by M. de Brèves, who in 1605 was sent on a special embassy to protest, on the part of the French, against the lawless proceedings of the Algerine pirates, and to settle the terms of a treaty between the Dey and Henri Quatre:—

"There is no port, a half-ruined mole suffices to shelter the galleys. Ships anchor at the foot of the town walls, and if this harbour is not sufficient in time of storm, they are dragged up on to the shore."

Another traveller in the seventeenth century writes—

"The mole is a great mass of stone piled up so as almost to form a half-circle. It is from six to seven paces wide and three hundred paces long. By this enormous structure is formed the port, which usually contains more than a hundred vessels of one kind and another, but they are so badly protected against the Greek wind, or tramontana, that in the year 1619 more than twenty-five were wrecked here in a single day."—*Histoire de Barbarie. Dan Pierre*, 1649.

In spite, then, of the enormous amount of labour and treasure that had been expended in the construction of the famous mole, it offered at the best but a very uncertain protection to the pirate-fleet.

"Algiers was indeed provided with a port, but the shelter was far from being worth the sacrifices which it had cost. On the one hand it wanted breadth and depth, on the other it was exposed to the north-east winds, and to the furious seas which they raised. Then was begun, in the hope of terminating this unsatisfactory state of affairs, that famous jetty which takes its rise from the southern point of the island—a gigantic work begun by the Turks two centuries ago, continued

since 1830 by the French, and which is still slowly advancing into the open sea, where to stop, it is impossible to say.

"Every year vast numbers of unhappy Christian slaves died of ill-treatment and hard work on this mole, and every year storms carried away a portion of the cruel holocaust. Enormous sums of money were swallowed up by the mole, which, however, during the Turkish rule, only extended to a distance of a hundred and forty yards; and every autumn, when the Turkish fleet was fitting itself out for sea, it was compelled to quit this dangerous anchorage, and take its winter station in the roadstead of Bougie."—*L'Algérie. M. Carette*, 1850.

Every winter the shipping continued to suffer great damage from the sudden Mediterranean storms, and no measures seemed effectual to prevent this.

Laugier de Tassy, in the beginning of the eighteenth century, writes—

"All the ships are huddled together in the port, and secured to the quays by long ropes, but the storms often commit enormous damage among them, by crushing them one against the other. As the great mole is exposed to the north, to prevent its being swept away by the sea, which rushes with great impetuosity over a sandbank just outside the harbour, the slaves of the Deylik are employed all the year round at the stone quarries near Pointe Pescade, carrying these stones to the mole and throwing them into the sea. The sea continually washes them away, but they are always carefully restored."—*Histoire du Royaume d'Alger*, 1725.

Even a hundred years later, Mrs. Broughton speaks of a certain guardian-pasha of the slaves as being "a good man," for when they had to be called up in the night on account of a hurricane in the port, to drag the galleys on shore, "he would at his own expense give each of the poor drenched creatures a glass of aqua fortis" (*Six Years' Residence in Algiers*).

On the capitulation of Algiers, the French Government at once took measures for the maintenance of the harbour-works executed by the Turks. But they speedily felt the

necessity of providing more secure anchorage for their ships.

On the 11th February, 1835, a tremendous storm wrecked no less than fourteen vessels in the very port of Algiers, and a small marble monument, in the form of a pyramid erected on the "island," records the generous exertions and heroic death of a certain captain of artillery, Charles de Lyvois, who perished in the attempt to carry aid to a sinking vessel on this occasion. Shortly afterwards, in 1836, the new works were begun. Huge masses of rock were at first hurled down into the sea, but the difficulty of transporting them, and their instability in the water, were found to be grave objections to their use. Finally enormous blocks of concrete were adopted as the material, and by the aid of machinery, the last thirty years have accomplished what two centuries of indefatigable labour had been powerless to effect. The shape of the harbour is somewhat peculiar. Again to quote M. Carette:—

"The French engineers at first followed the direction taken by the Turkish jetty. But this they found would reduce the port to very inconsiderable dimensions. From this point then the mole began to look towards the open sea—to have ambitious views. Various projects were broached, each one giving place, after some two or three years, to a still more extensive one. In the midst of these uncertainties the jetty grew steadily, reproducing in its form the movement of ideas.

"After every discussion it made a start seawards. These successive alterations have imparted to the French jetty a curious and unjustifiable shape, contrary to the dictates of experience and to the principles of hydraulic science, an imperishable monument of administrative hesitation, of diplomatic scruples, of that constant indecision which has marked the whole course of our conquest in Northern Africa."

The harbour is, however, in spite of these adverse criticisms, a fine one. It covers an area of about two

hundred and twenty-two acres, has an average depth of forty feet, and is capable of containing, it is said, forty men-of-war and three hundred merchantmen of 100 to 150 tons each (*Murray's Guide*). In addition to the jetty which starts from the island, another, similar in construction, is thrown out close to Fort Bab-Azoun, in a direction across the mouth of the harbour, the entrance to which is between the two. At each extremity stands a fort. The whole length of the two jetties is over two thousand yards, and up to the year 1868 the French Government had expended two millions sterling upon it. Since that time two large docks have been constructed, capable of containing the largest vessels, and there are also some large repairing docks close to the maritime arsenal. In the centre of the basin is the battery of El-Djefna, built on a rock, a spot which, with its vivid patch of green, always makes itself very distinctly observable on the blue unruffled water of the harbour.

The ancient FORTIFICATIONS of Algiers consisted of walls thirty feet high flanked by square turrets, which were in the first instance erected by the enterprising Kheir-ed-din, and which were afterwards strengthened and enlarged by his successors under the Turkish Government. The ancient walls were in some places of enormous thickness. They enclosed only the triangle formed by the Kasba, the Fort Neuf, and the Rue Porte Neuve—the north-western half of the town. Haedo writes, 1612—

"The circuit of this city may be compared in form to a stringed bow. The walls which represent the wood of the bow are built on a hill, and rise gradually to its summit. A person who from the sea, faces the town of Algiers, will find on his right, one end of the bow to the north-

west, to his left the other extremity, which is situated to the south-east. Between these two points, and to complete the resemblance of the figure we have described, the string of the bow is represented by a wall lower than the others, bordering the sea, and continually lapped by the waves. Our simile is, however, a little defective in that which concerns the string of the bow, since the wall which represents it, instead of being in a perfectly straight line from one end to the other as it should be, before reaching the right extremity of the bow makes a sudden turn out to sea, on a small natural promontory. It is from this point that the mole begins which was built by Kheir-ed-din Barbarossa to form a port, which he succeeded in doing, by filling up the short space between the island and the land."

Dr. Shaw describes the walls of Algiers as being not more than a mile and a half in circumference, though containing a population of one hundred thousand Mahomedans, fifteen thousand Jews, and two thousand Christian slaves. The latest census gives a total population only of forty-nine thousand, of whom little more than ten thousand are Mahomedans, and the area which this calculation includes almost doubles the limits of the ancient town.

The modern ramparts, which have replaced the old Moorish walls, have their apex at a point south of the Kasba and above it, and stretch to the sea on each side to the Fort Bab-Azoun on the south, and to the Porte Bab-el-Oued on the north of the city.

Along the ramparts runs a boulevard planted with eucalyptus, and affording a shady and pleasant promenade, from which a succession of beautiful views over sea and land may be obtained. The interior line of the fortifications is followed by a carriage drive, consisting of a series of zigzags, which, starting with a steep hill just above the Porte d'Isly, known as Rampe Rovigo, is continued by a constantly ascending but most picturesque road to the

Porte de Sahel; from thence it turns to the right, leaving the great barrack (Quartier des Tagarins) on the left, and passing through the ancient city wall, cuts the Kasba in half.

From the old citadel a broad new road (Boulevard Valée), from which there is a charming view of St. Eugène, the mosque-like Church of Notre-Dame d'Afrique on the hill, and the valley of Bou-Zarea, leads past the imposing fortress of the civil prison. Take the first turning to the left from this road. It is known as the Rampe Valée (from the name of the governor in whose time it was made), and leads by a series of twists and turns between charming gardens and flowery villas, and with a continual succession of the most varied and delightful views, to the upper gate of the Marengo Garden. The traveller on foot can if he please from thence quickly regain the lower portion of the town by passing through the garden. The carriage-drive, still closely following the line of the fortifications, entirely skirts the garden, and by a constantly serpentine road, at every turn of which a fresh point of view presents itself, gradually reaches the Porte Bab-el-Oued, the street of that name, the Lycée, and the lower entrance of the Marengo Garden.

This route, if taken on foot, can easily be divided into two, by ascending in each case through the Arab town to the Kasba, and by turning thence either right or left, as fancy may dictate. The views of each *Rampe* are naturally seen best on the descent. The quickest way to the Kasba from the lower town is either by the Rue de la Casbah, the Rue Porte Neuve, or up the steps of the Boulevard du Centaure behind the Theatre. The ancient city was defended by forts, which had, as we have mentioned, the disadvantage of being commanded by the hills behind

them, but which were in themselves strong enough and well provided with guns. The chief of these were :—

The Citadel, or Kasba, and Palace of the Deys (page 207), which at the time of the French conquest was defended by two hundred guns. Behind it, close to the Quartier des Tagarins, was the old Fort de l'Étoile, a ruin at the time of the invasion of the French, and from which they made their attack upon the Kasba. It was said to have been destroyed by a negress, a slave jealous of her master. Setting fire to a train of gunpowder beneath the fort, she at the same time sacrificed herself, her faithless lover, and the object of her resentment—the new favourite. On the height above the Kasba, to the right, commanding the whole city, is the Fort de l'Empereur, so called from its being built on the spot where Charles V. pitched his camp during his disastrous expedition to Algiers in 1541 (page 321). The Fort des Vingt-Quatre Heures, known to the Arabs by the name of Bordj-Setti-Takelilt, the head of the holy negress, which once stood on the site of the Artillery Arsenal, was destroyed in 1853. The Fort Neuf, between the Place Bab-el-Oued and the sea, is now used as a military prison. The Fort des Anglais, on the road to St. Eugène, is a cabaret. Of the fortress on Pointe Pescade, known as Barbarossa's Castle, only a ruin remains, and in the contrary direction Fort Bab-Azoun, at the end of the Boulevard de la République, now forms a part of the city wall, and is also used as a prison. This fort was at the time of the French occupation armed with forty-eight guns.

But the chief care of the Turkish Government was to defend the port.

"Five great pieces of cannon defend the gate at the end of the mole," writes Pierre Dan, "and on the mole itself are sixty-six large guns, most of them taken as prizes from the Christian powers." A battery was also established on the little island in the harbour, the Djefna, and, at the time of the French occupation, the whole port was absolutely bristling with guns.

The ancient city possessed five great gates. Two looked towards the sea—the gate of the Fishers, on the shore close to the Arsenal; the gate of the Mole, or Marina, on which, we are told, hung as trophies, five great bells, the only ones in the city, which had been taken from the Spaniards at Oran; the gate Bab-el-Oued, which was situated at the end of the street of that name.

"Before this gate is the spot which these Barbarians have set apart for the death of Christians, and where many have received and still do receive the crown of martyrdom, preferring rather to suffer all imaginable torments, than to renounce the faith of the true God, to follow the errors of Mahomet. And this is the only place in the town where Christians are executed."—*Dan Pierre. Histoire de Barbarie.*

This was also the place where Jews suffered death by burning.

The New Gate (Porte Neuve), in the Rue de la Lyre, formed the boundary of the city on the south-west side. It was by this gate that the French entered Algiers.

Beneath it was the gate Bab-Azoun, in the Place Bresson.

"In this faubourg lodge those Arab and Moorish merchants who bring provisions to the city. It is the same place where the Turks are executed, and one always sees some unfortunate wretches impaled on the hooks."—*Dan Pierre.*

This was the usual method of punishment. The victim

was flung from the top of the battlements, and being caught by some of the long iron spikes with which the gate was furnished, was left thus to perish by a miserably lingering death—of pain, or exhaustion, or starvation, as the case might be.

Mrs. Broughton, in the account of her childish reminiscences, relates several cases of execution on the hooks of Bab-Azoun at the early part of this century; and indeed the French, on entering Algiers in 1830, were horrified to find the impaled bodies and dissevered heads of a number of Europeans ranged upon this gate. They were their own countrymen, the unfortunate survivors of the two French men-of-war—the *Silène* and the *Aventure*—which had been wrecked a short while before, in the bay!

The modern gates are the Porte Bab-Azoun, on the Route de Constantine; the Porte d'Isly, close above it; the Porte du Sahel, leading from the Kasba and upper town to the west; and the Porte Bab-el-Oued, leading to St. Eugène and Pointe Pescade.

The gates are all provided with drawbridges, fortified, and guarded, and altogether Algiers has the appearance of being a very strong city, although some French military critics are of opinion, that some portion of the very large sum that has been expended on making the town invulnerable to an impossible assault from the Arabs, would have been better employed in rendering it secure from an attack by sea.

The total strength of the French army in Algeria is seventy thousand men, consisting of three regiments of Zouaves, three regiments of native rifles known as Turcos—the dress of both these troops being very much the same as

that of the old janissaries—one foreign regiment, and three regiments of light infantry known by the name of Zephyrs, and formed out of soldiers convicted of some military offence. The name, which was originally a sobriquet given to one of the regiments, has survived and been accepted by the three. The cavalry consists of three regiments of Chasseurs d'Afrique, and three regiments of Spahis, or native light horse.

The dress of these last is extremely striking, consisting of the white haik, which covers the head, and a long scarlet cloak. They are mounted on white Arabs, with the peculiar native saddle and trappings, and are altogether ideal warriors of the desert. Very few are stationed in the town of Algiers, but they form the body-guard of the Governor-General, and never fail to excite the stranger's interest and attention, as the orderlies are seen galloping, or as it seems rather flying, along the Boulevard on their spirited little steeds.

Indeed, the varied and peculiar costumes of the different French regiments, the turbaned and red-jacketed Zouaves, the turbaned and blue-jacketed Turcos, the pale blue uniforms of the Chasseurs d'Afrique, and the barbaric splendour of the Spahis, contribute not a little to the peculiar gaiety and richness of colouring, of every Algerian street-scene.

CHAPTER XIII.

JARDIN MARENGO.—FORT DES VINGT-QUATRE HEURES.—GERONIMO THE MARTYR.—ZAOUIA OF ABD-ER-RAHMAN.

"Faith builds a bridge across the gulf of death."
Young's Night Thoughts.

SETTING out from the Place du Gouvernement, an arcaded street leads in a northerly direction, the Rue Bab-el-Oued, or the river-gate, to the gate of the same name.

This street is a continuation of the Rue Bab-Azoun, is built in the same style, and will be found to contain some good shops, though perhaps, scarcely equal to those in the Bab-Azoun. These streets, which existed under a very different aspect in the Arab time, were then, as now, the seat of the chief commercial activity of the city. They were then, like the rest of the Arab streets, so narrow as to be impassable to vehicles. Indeed, we are told by Mrs. Broughton, that in 1806—12—

"There was only one carriage in all Algiers, which was kept in the court of the Dey's garden-house. That was without wheels, and was intended to be suspended between two mules. But it could not be used, as the streets were not wide enough to allow it to pass. It was therefore preserved as a useless appanage of royal state, the wonder of all who were permitted the honour of gazing upon it."

We are also informed by Pananti, 1814, that there was

not a shop in Algiers "worth looking at." The Moorish and native dealers have now completely abandoned this quarter, and have retired into the upper town, or to the arcades which lead from the Place du Gouvernement. The Arabic-titled streets are now essentially French.

The first object of interest on this route will be on the left—the church at the corner of the Rue de la Casbah. It is now known as Notre-Dame des Victoires, and was formerly a mosque. The most noticeable thing about it is the beautifully carved door, the work of a native artist. It also contains a fine white marble altar and a piece of sculpture representing the Virgin and Child. Beyond this, we get into a somewhat desolate-looking spot, where the old Arab buildings are still in process of being cleared away, to make room for modern improvements. Then two imposing-looking modern buildings attract us: that on the right is a large barrack and military prison; that on the left the Lycée, or college, where youths of all races, both Christian and Mahomedan, are educated together. The Arab students wear a costume very much like the Zouave uniform, and the Europeans the ordinary dress of the French schoolboy. The religious instruction of each creed is provided for, the Arab boys being taken on Fridays to attend the service at the mosque. The course of instruction is precisely similar to that of all other Lycées in France, and should have a most beneficial effect, in breaking down the barriers of prejudice which exist between the various races of Algiers, and in advancing, not only learning but civilization, among the natives. The college is capable of accommodating eight hundred boarders.

A little gate beside the college is the entrance to the charmingly laid-out plot of ground, known as the Jardin

Marengo. It clothes the side of a steep hill, up which winding walks have been cut, shaded by tropical or semi-tropical trees and shrubs. Here, in the depth of winter are to be found rose-bushes in full bloom, hedges of geranium, walls of bougainvillier, clumps of wild gladiolus, and a variety of curious southern flowers, amid palms, orange-trees, bamboos and magnolias. In short, it is a hothouse turned out of doors. The garden takes its name from Colonel Marengo, who, when governor of Algiers, had the necessary works executed by gangs of military prisoners. It was intended to be first a zoological, and next a botanical garden; but the municipal funds not sufficing for these plans, it is now simply a place of recreation, frequented chiefly by French nursemaids and children, except on Saturdays, when it is taken complete possession of, by the Jews. The garden is adorned with fountains and Arab kiosks, and in the middle is a monumental column, on which are inscribed the victories of Napoleon. From this point the view is very beautiful, embracing the whole of the Bay of Algiers, with its rocky promontories, while the Oriental-looking Church of Notre-Dame d'Afrique is a conspicuous object on the heights to the left.

The open space immediately beneath the Jardin, on which soldiers are continually being drilled, known as the *Place d'Armes* or *Place Bab-el-Oued*, adjoining the Arsenal d'Artillerie, was the site of the old Moorish cemetery. On the north side the pashas or deys were interred; and here, we are told, were to be seen the tombs of seven of these potentates, raised to the supreme dignity, deposed and murdered all in one day!

Here, too, close to the sea-shore, washed by the blue

waves, and now engulfed beneath them, was the melancholy but sacred little strip of sand, where, year after year, in the palmy days of Algerian terrorism, hundreds of unfortunate Christians found a repose which life denied them —their only escape from a hopeless and cruel slavery. Here was the old Christian burying-ground of Algiers.

"The origin of the Christian cemetery is owing to an act of singular beneficence which deserves to be recorded. A Capuchin friar, once confessor of Don Juan of Austria, was enduring at Algiers all the miseries of slavery. The hero of Lepanto being informed of this, sent his old friend a considerable sum of money in order to purchase his liberty; but the good monk during his captivity had been a witness of the inhumanity of the Turks, who refused even to bury their unfortunate Christian slaves, when their sad lives ended. Instead therefore of using the money sent him for his own enfranchisement, he consecrated a part of it to the purchase of a tract of land beside the sea-shore, where for the future his fellow-sufferers would find a resting-place, and with the remainder of the money he liberated several other slaves whose cases he thought sadder than his own. Happy in his good deeds, he ended his life amid the horrors from which he had freed others, leaving behind him not even a name by which posterity can bless him. In the little cemetery which the Christians owe to him, his place is unmarked."—*L'Algérie. Berbrugger.*

Of the cemetery, Mussulman or Christian, no trace now remains. In 1832 the old burying-ground was swept away, without much regard to the sacred memories of the place, by order of the French authorities, and the spot which was once God's-acre is now devoted to military exercises.

The adjoining *Arsenal d'Artillerie* occupies the site of the old Turkish fort of Bordj-Setti-Takelilt, known to the Europeans as the Fort des Vingt-Quatre Heures. It was commenced by Mahommed Pasha in 1568, finished by Pasha Euldj-Ali, and destroyed by the French in 1853.

On the fort was the following inscription in Arabic :—

"The very great Vizier, devoting his wealth to holy and pious uses, has built this high and formidable rampart. The height of it is so great that it equals the firmament, and on the face of the earth nothing has been seen like it.

"To immortalise his reign Mahommed Pacha, the servant of God, built it in the year 979 of the Hegira" (A.D. 1568).

The Arabic name signifies the fort of the holy negress; and tradition asserted that in a little niche beneath a marble bench at the entrance of the fort, the head of a female negro saint had been immured, but on the demolition of the fort this was not discovered.

The name "des Vingt-Quatre Heures," by which the fortress had always been known to Europeans, is credibly stated to have originated in the tragedy which occurred during the erection of this fortress, viz. the martyrdom of the Christian slave Geronimo, and which could never have been dissociated from this particular spot.

It was a tragedy which in its acting occupied exactly the space of twenty-four hours. Hence the name handed down by generation after generation of Christian slaves in the prisons of Algiers.

The account which we have of the life and death of Geronimo comes to us from the pen of the Spanish Benedictine, Haedo, Abbé de Fromesta, who, in 1612, wrote a history and most accurate and remarkable description of Algiers—remarkable especially in this, that he had never himself visited the place, but had gained all his knowledge of it simply from the verbal accounts of others. He was for many years in the service of the archbishop of the same name, probably a relative, primate of Palermo and captain-general of Sicily, to whom he dedicates his book. This good bishop, moved by "the misery which the Christians

suffer in Algiers, and the terrible evils which result therefrom to Christianity," employed a great part of his immense fortune in reclaiming Christian captives from slavery; and it was from the mouths of these fugitives whom the Archbishop received and succoured, that his secretary or almoner, whichever he may have been, took the information upon which he compiled his interesting work. The following is the account of the life and death of Geronimo, taken from the text of Haedo :—

In 1540, when the Spaniards held possession of Oran, during one of their raids into the country, the soldiers took prisoner a little Arab child, whom they put up for sale as a slave. The baby-prisoner was bought by the vicar-general, Juan Caro, who baptized him under the name of Geronimo, and, taking him to his own house, educated him and treated him with much kindness. Later on, he was carried home by some Arab slaves, who, during an attack of plague, when the garrison of Oran was camping out in the fields, and discipline was relaxed, managed to make their escape, and thinking to do the boy a kindness, took him with them. For some years he lived among his own people, a professed Mahomedan, but he subsequently returned to Oran of his own accord, and to his old master Juan Caro, desiring, as he said, "henceforth to live in the faith of the Divine Saviour."

As may be imagined, it was with the greatest joy and satisfaction that the Vicar-general welcomed back the young Geronimo. He took him at once into his service, and treated him with great affection. When he arrived at man's estate, and had already shown himself on various occasions brave in character, his patron permitted him to enter the

Spanish guard as a paid soldier; and afterwards, marrying him in his own house to a young Arab slave, who was also a convert to Christianity, he treated them both as though they had been his own children.

In his military career Geronimo gained both credit and honours; and he had passed, we are told, ten years in the service of Christ, to his own great happiness, when, in the month of May, 1569, he had the misfortune to be made prisoner by the Algerine pirates.

He accompanied a party of nine Spaniards, who had received orders to make a descent upon the coast at some little distance from Oran, where there was reported to be an Arab encampment. They were chased by two Moorish brigantines, and the whole party, with the exception of the leader, who managed to escape, were made prisoners.

Haedo relates—

"As it was the custom that the Pacha should take as his own share of the spoil two out of every ten whom they made captive, Geronimo and another fell to the lot of the governor, who was at that time Euldj-Ali, a Calabrian renegade. Geronimo, finding himself one of the slaves of the Pacha, was immediately carried to the Bagno, which is their prison.

"Then the devil, who is always ready to make use of his opportunities to work evil to the good, in a very few days made the facts of Geronimo's story known to the people among whom he was cast—how he was an Arab by birth, and how he had chosen to abandon his own nation to become a Christian."

This naturally led to persecution of the renegade. He was loaded with a heavy chain, and not allowed to leave the prison even to work with his companions in misfortune.

"Many Mussulmen, especially the learned men, priests, and marabouts, having heard what had occurred to Geronimo in his childhood, imagined that it would not be difficult to bring him back once

more, to their faith and opinions. Many of them, therefore, with this intention, visited him continually at the Bagno, and did their best to convert him to their religion, some by means of arguments, and others either by promises or threats. But all these labours were pure loss of time, for Geronimo, animated by a living and constant faith, for all answer begged them not to expend unnecessary breath, for that nothing in the world, neither terrors nor persuasions, would induce him to abandon Christianity.

"Sometimes after one of these interviews he would say to his companion Christian captives, 'These people think that they will make me become a Mussulman, but that they will never do, even if they kill me.'"

The Moors, finding themselves thus baffled, and perceiving that their exhortations were disregarded, proceeded to sterner argument. They laid the case before the Pasha Euldj-Ali, insisting much on the importance of the matter.

"According to their idea, the holy constancy of the servant of Jesus Christ was sheer obstinacy, and they demanded for this disobedient son of Ishmael such a punishment as should, at least, act as an example and warning to other renegades.

"The Pacha was very indignant at the account of Geronimo's obduracy, and sent away the complainants with kind words and promises, while at the same time a desire awoke in his heart to make this servant of God suffer some signal and cruel punishment.

"Pre-occupied by these thoughts, the renegade Pacha went that same day to examine the works of a bastion or fort, which at that time was being constructed, outside the gate of Bab-el-Oued towards the shore, for the defence of a certain landing-place for boats which is near to this point. He examined the work carefully and long, and at the moment when he turned to leave, he called to him one of his Christian slaves, a mason, Maître Michel, a Navarrese, who was the chief of the labourers employed at the fortress.

"'Michel,' said the Pacha, 'you see this empty mould of concrete. For the present leave it so. I have a mind to make concrete of that dog of Oran who refuses to come back to the faith of Islam.' He then returned to his palace. Maître Michel did as he was ordered, and shortly afterwards, the day's work being done, for it was already late, he returned to the Bagno with the other slaves who like him belonged to

the Pacha. As soon as he arrived at the prison, Michel in great trouble sought Geronimo, and told him the cruel order which had been given him by Euldj-Ali, exhorting him to patience, and at the same time bidding him prepare for death, which he felt sure was not far from him.

"On hearing this news, the brave Geronimo did not lose heart, but replied with a resolute spirit, 'God's will be done. Let not these miserable men think that they will frighten me out of the faith of Christ by the idea of this cruel death. May our blessed Saviour only pardon my sins and preserve my soul.'

"Some of the Christians who stood around and heard these words did their best to console and encourage Geronimo. To them he replied, 'I have confidence in the Lord that He will, by his grace, give me strength to suffer for his holy name, but I entreat you all to commend me to God.'"

The whole of that night Geronimo passed in prayer and pious exercises, in which he was assisted by a priest who was among the slaves of the Pasha. It was scarcely three o'clock in the morning when three or four janissaries of the Pasha entered the Bagno, and demanded Geronimo, who was still at prayer, in the church which had been for a long time past, established in the prison. When summoned, he advanced at once to meet these men, who, as soon as they perceived him, began to assail him with abusive epithets, such as dog, coward, Jew, and traitor, and asked him why he refused to return to the faith of his fathers.

"But to all this the servant of God did not answer so much as by a single word. The janissaries having placed him in their midst, led him at once in the direction of the fort of which we have spoken, which was to be the scene of his glorious death. There the Pacha himself awaited him. Geronimo having arrived in the presence of the Governor, who was accompanied by a great number of Turks and renegades, Euldj-Ali addressed him in these words.

"'Well, dog, so you refuse to return to the faith of Islam?'

"'I am a Christian, and a Christian I will die,' replied the martyr.

"'As you please,' returned the Pacha; 'then here,' showing him the mould of concrete, 'you shall be buried alive.'

"'Do your will,' said the holy man, filled with admirable and singular courage, 'I am prepared. The prospect of death is not likely to make me abandon the faith of our Saviour Jesus Christ.'

"Euldj-Ali seeing his resolution, ordered that the chain which he wore about his leg should be removed; that his feet and hands should be tied, and that he should be placed at the bottom of the block of concrete which had been set aside for the purpose the day before, and should there be buried alive.

"The janissaries executed these orders on the spot, and Geronimo, his limbs tied together, was laid upon the planks, face downwards. A renegade Spaniard known among Christians as Tamango, and to the Turks as Djafer, then jumped with both feet on the martyr's body, and called out loudly to those about him, to bring earth to fill in the grave.

"His cruel desire was soon gratified, and the earth was heaped over the body of this saint of the Lord, who, meekly suffering all things, like a lamb opened not his mouth. When the earth was filled in, Tamango began beating it down with his hands and feet. Seeing which the other renegades, desiring also to show themselves good Mussulmen and accomplished Turks, came to his assistance, and jumping upon the earth trod it down under their feet. Thus between them was accomplished the death of this noble martyr of Christ, while the spirit of Geronimo, we may well believé, was received by our Saviour among the number of His saints in Heaven, to receive there the crown and reward of his holy and glorious death.

"The Pacha assisted at the whole of this spectacle, accompanied by a vast number of Turks, renegades and Moors, who looked on with great pleasure and contentment. When all was ended, and the body of the holy man enclosed in his noble sepulchre, Euldj-Ali returned to his palace, saying as he went, that he should scarcely have thought the Christian would have met death with so much courage.

"This happened in the middle of September (the 18th) of the year 1569, and will be a day ever memorable to those who love the name of our Saviour Christ.

"The Christians who worked at the Fort Bab-el-Oued deliberated afterwards if they could by any means obtain the body of the martyr, but it did not seem to them possible, on account of the constant presence of the Turks and the men who acted as overseers. At the same time this translation of the holy man's relics would not have been opportune, since the memory of the martyr, of his glorious death

and courage, is likely to be much better preserved by his remaining buried there, in so noble a tomb and in sight of all, not only of the Christians but of the blinded Turks and Moors, and above all of the renegades, who in considering the sufferings of this excellent martyr of God, can scarcely fail to be struck with shame for their own deeds. But we hope that one day the Divine goodness will permit us to extricate the bones of Geronimo from this place, and unite them with those of the other holy martyrs of Christ, whose sufferings and happy deaths have made this country of slavery sacred."—*Haedo. Historia e Topografia de Argel*, 1612.

This account of the martyrdom of Geronimo was translated from the Spanish into French by the late M. Berbrugger, and published in the *Akhbar*, an Algerine paper, on the 5th October, 1847. Haedo had very minutely indicated the exact spot where the body of the martyr lay :—

"If the fortress is examined on the side looking towards the north, it is easy to perceive the very spot which encloses the holy body, because on that side of the wall is a block which is indented and uneven. In truth, the body of the martyr having decomposed, the earth of this particular block has sunk in such a manner as to be quite remarkable."

In reference to this passage, M. Berbrugger writes in the same article in the *Akhbar*—

"Many times we have examined this wall which contains the body of a martyr, without being able to discover any marks in the stone except those caused by Christian bullets, but amongst the blocks is one which it is not very easy to examine, on account of a huge cactus which has grown up against it, and which covers it with its leaves. It is possibly there that the bones of Geronimo rest. And this tree, which has thus so curiously sprung from the very wall, is it not a sort of martyr's palm to shadow and protect the body of the saint, until the day when Christianity, triumphing on the soil of Africa, shall be enabled to verify the pious hopes of the historian Haedo ?"

Curiously enough, it was behind this very cactus that the skeleton of Geronimo was found. In consequence of the

representations of M. Berbrugger, and the public attention which had been called to the facts of the case by his means—when in 1853 it was decided to destroy the fortress—careful search was made for the remains of the martyr, and in the exact place described by Haedo, and indicated by M. Berbrugger, the skeleton of a man was found, enclosed in a block of pisa, in which his body had left an impression. The position is very much that described by Haedo. The hands are tied together behind the back; the legs have the appearance of having been wrenched apart by a convulsive movement. Most of the ribs of the skeleton found were broken, which bears out in a remarkable way Haedo's account of the martyrdom, and his description of Geronimo's person applies equally well to the remains discovered. "The martyr Geronimo was," writes the Benedictine, "at the time of his death about thirty-five years of age, small, and spare. His skin was very brown, like all the Moors of this country of Barbary." The Arab type of face is plainly discernible, in the plaster-cast taken of the mould formed by the martyr's body, to be seen at the Bibliothèque Musée (page 257). In short, every circumstance points to the identity of the remains found, with those of Geronimo, martyred three hundred years before, buried, as Haedo had described it, "in the sight of all," viz. on the very angle of the fort, past which was the chief road into the city. The block mentioned by the old chronicler as being "indented" was not that in which the skeleton was found, nor could the cause supposed by the historian, of the dissolution of the body, have had any effect upon the concrete, as the form of the body had been preserved entire. The remains were actually discovered just above the block marked and

described by Haedo, "which, perhaps," says M. Berbrugger, "makes the circumstance no less remarkable."

Immediately upon the discovery of the relics, Monseigneur Pavy, Archbishop of Algiers, who had interested himself very anxiously in the search for the martyr's remains, set off on a special mission to Rome to plead the cause of the Algerine martyr, and, if possible, to obtain his canonization.

The mission was not altogether successful. For the creation of a saint, it seems, miracles are considered essential, and the bones of poor martyred Geronimo could not be induced to assert themselves in this fashion, so that after all, he has had to rest content with the lower, yet possibly more respectable title of "venerable," which is inscribed upon his tombstone—"Geronimo the venerable servant of God" —while the greater number of Europeans in Algiers, ignoring these nice distinctions, and doubtless ignorant, no less, of the fact that they are flying in the face of Papal authority, than that Geronimo himself was an Arab and not a Frenchman, do not hesitate to grant letters of canonization to the local luminary, and dub him saint of their own appointment. He would certainly seem to have a nobler claim to the distinction, than is possessed by many of the worthies whose names fill the Roman calendar. The removal of the bones and of the block of concrete which contained the impress of the martyr's body, to the cathedral church of St. Philippe, was authorised by the Pope at the beginning of the year 1854, and was carried out with great pomp and ceremony by Archbishop Pavy. The tomb is in a chapel to the right of entrance (page 250).

At the top of the Marengo Garden, from which we have taken our survey of the Place Bab-el-Oued, is a very striking

group of Arab houses, among which, conspicuous from its graceful minaret, is the Mosque, or rather *Zaouia*, of *Sidi Abd-er-Rahman*. The meaning of the word *zaouia* is a building containing a certain number of rooms set apart for the reception of poor strangers, pilgrims or students, for the maintenance of which a sum of money has been left by

Zaouia of Sidi Abd-er-Rahman.

some charitable person. Attached to this asylum is usually either a mosque or a koubba—the tomb of a saint. In this case there are both mosque and tomb, the tomb of the celebrated Arab saint, Sidi Abd-er-Rahman-eth-Thalebi. This personage, who died in 1471, has a reputation above that of the ordinary Arab marabout, for he is said to have been

a man distinguished as well by his virtues and benevolence as by his learning. He was the author of certain literary works on theology and Mussulman jurisprudence. His tomb is the object of the greatest veneration and the goal of many pilgrimages, while the revenue of the shrine amounts to a considerable sum from the offerings of the faithful. These funds, as is the case with most of the religious establishments in Algeria, are appropriated by the French Government in exchange for a certain fixed sum paid annually, for the maintenance of the building, and the priests who are attached to it.

The tomb is well worthy of a visit. From the upper gate of the Jardin Marengo turn to the left. The entrance is down a flight of stone steps, which are usually crowded with repulsive-looking beggars. There are two or three koubbas, or separate small buildings, containing tombs. That of Sidi Abd-er-Rahman is in the mosque. A small door in the wall admits to the burial-ground adjoining, which overhangs the Jardin Marengo. A matted vestibule, out of which open several small chambers for the use of the priests or pilgrims, leads to the inner sanctuary.

This is far more ornate in style than the mosques of the lower town, and is, after the Grand Mosque, decided to be the most ancient religious building in Algeria. It is extremely quaint and picturesque, with a kind of barbaric grandeur about its decorations, which is suggestive of the mausoleum of some savage African potentate, rather than that of a dignified Moslem saint. Rich ornamental carpets of various patterns are laid upon the floor; the light is mosaiced through tiny slits of coloured glass, the walls are decorated with beautiful old coloured tiles, and also with framed and glazed verses of the Koran. The tomb itself,

which has something the appearance of a small tent bedstead, is draped with a canopy of variously coloured silks and stuffs in picturesque confusion; it is surmounted with clusters of flags and hung with scented rosaries. Beneath the draperies is to be seen nothing but a flat tombstone, on which, perhaps, has been laid here and there a flower, symbolical of the hopes or wishes of some devotee. Offerings of a more substantial kind hang from the roof of the mosque. Lamps and lanterns of every form and style—no two agreeing; embroidered banners; ostrich eggs enclosed in cases of network or silver filigree form part of the strange assemblage, and testify to the generosity of Sidi Abd-er-Rahman's admirers, perhaps the most curious offering of all being some handsome French clocks, which are disposed on little brackets against the wall. About the tomb of the saint are gathered the remains of various pashas, beys, and deys; and in the cemetery attached to the *Zaouia* is buried Ahmed Pasha, last Dey of Constantine, his grave being surmounted by a small kiosk. This potentate, who died at Algiers in 1850, a prisoner and pensioner of the French Government, was a man of considerable talent and energy, though of ferocious character. He had been powerful enough to declare himself independent of the Dey of Algiers, to whom he was supposed to owe tribute; but on the invasion of the French in 1830, he joined his forces with those of Hussein Pasha, and fought bravely at the defence of Algiers. Finding resistance useless, he would have persuaded Hussein to retreat from the city with him. On his refusing to do so he retired before the capitulation. The French on making themselves masters of Algiers formally deposed the tributary Dey of Constantine,

but they were not in a position to enforce their decision, and Ahmed, in his stronghold of Constantine, set them and their decrees at defiance.

The first expedition made by the French against Constantine was in the year 1836 under Marshal Clauzel. At this time the French policy was to reduce as much as possible the army of Algiers, and the whole force at the Marshal's command was limited to seventeen thousand men, though he asked for double the number. In November 1836, he somewhat rashly undertook an expedition against the tyrant of Constantine, with a force of only seven thousand French soldiers and twelve hundred Turcos. The results were, a signal defeat, the loss by cold and exhaustion of a great portion of his troops, and the recall and disgrace of the Marshal.

In the year following, a more successful expedition was organized by Count Damrémont, who succeeded Clauzel in command. Damrémont himself was killed at the siege of Constantine, but after a stubborn resistance of seven days the town was taken, Ahmed, however, escaping with some of his adherents to the mountains of Kabylia. From these fastnesses he carried on a desultory warfare with the French for a period of eleven years, but at length, after repeated disasters, he surrendered himself in the year 1848, and passed the remaining two years of his life as a prisoner on parole at Algiers.

In the cemetery is a carouba-tree, the leaves of which are supposed to possess a peculiar virtue in curing fever.

From the Zaouia of Sidi Abd-er-Rahman a steep path leads directly up to the Kasba, and a more circuitous route (a carriage road) to the same point, past the new fortress of the civil prison.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE JEWISH QUARTER.—THE SYNAGOGUE.—THE CATHEDRAL.—THE GOVERNOR'S PALACE.—THE ARCHBISHOP'S PALACE.—THE BIBLIOTHÈQUE.—THE COURTS OF LAW.

> "These for devotion, and for pleasure those."
> *Sir R. Blackmore.*

THE quarter of Algiers most favoured by the Jews, who form so large a proportion of the native population, is that part of the city of which the Rue de la Lyre and the Rue Randon are the great arteries, lying between the French and the Arab towns, and possessing to some extent the characteristics of both. But though this district may be called the head-quarters of the Jewish community, they by no means confine themselves to it, as a walk through any part of the city one Saturday will evidence. On this day it will be found that two-thirds at least of the shops are closed, while some streets present almost the appearance of an English Sunday, so that the traveller is betrayed into stopping short, and asking himself, "Have I by any possibility mistaken the day?" Three holy-days are observed in the week in Algiers—Friday by the Mahomedans, Saturday by the Jews, and Sunday by the Europeans; but the Jewish Sabbath leaves its impress on the town more

decidedly as a day of rest than either of the others. A French Sunday has always about it an air rather of bustle than of repose; and the Mahomedans, though they are bidden to attend public worship on their Sabbath, are not enjoined, scarcely recommended to cease from labour. Indeed, they are warned by the Prophet from converting their day of prayer, or "assembly" as they call it, into a day of mere idleness and pleasure-seeking, "as do the Jews and Christians their Sabbaths." As a rule therefore, few Moorish shops are shut on Fridays, the vendor very often leaving all his wares exposed and unattended, while he goes to the mosque to perform his devotions. But the Saturday is rigidly observed by the Jews here as elsewhere—a remarkable trait of character in a people so addicted to the love of money-making.

A walk is strongly recommended through the Jewish quarter on Saturday afternoon, from the time when the service at the synagogue is over, about one P.M., until sunset. The whole Jewish population seem to spend these hours of enforced idleness—every kind of occupation being prohibited them except talking—in the streets, or at the open windows and doors of their houses.

Attired in their quaint, but on these occasions, gorgeous dress, the Jewish matrons—their jaws bound up as though prepared for the coffin, their heads tightly tied up in black silk bags, and their whole persons resplendent with gold embroidery and jewels—group themselves about the corners of the streets, or at their open doorways, and indulge in the feminine delight of a good gossip; the men in their rich Eastern dress—handsome fellows for the most part—lounge idly up and down the pavements, longing doubtless, for the

chibouck which the Sabbath denies them; the children walk demurely about, in twos and threes, the boys small imitations of their fathers, the little girls in long silk skirts reaching to the ground and large muslin aprons, like miniature mediæval relics, all with flashing black eyes and rich complexions not unheightened by art; while here and there a glowing face at an open lattice, reminds the beholder irresistibly of the Hebrew queen-coquette, who sought to win the favour of her conqueror.

Indeed, the whole life of Algiers is wonderfully suggestive of Scripture scenes and characters. And with regard to the Jews especially, one seems to realize their Eastern origin, to understand their character and history, all the more clearly, by seeing them thus among semi-barbaric surroundings and in their Oriental dress. With the picturesqueness they acquire a dignity which is certainly wanting to them elsewhere. They seem scarcely the same people, whose *mauvais goût* too often offends both eye and ear in our modern civilized Europe. The *synagogue* in Place Randon, to be reached by Rue Porte Neuve and streets diverging from the Rue de la Lyre, is a very handsome building after the Moorish style. The interior, which is square with a great dome, is ornamented with horse-shoe arches and a good deal of rich carved work. It is said to accommodate three hundred persons, exclusive of the galleries, which, as usual in Jewish places of worship, are reserved to the women.

When the synagogue is open (on Saturdays) no objection is made to strangers entering.

The site of the synagogue, formerly Impasse Orali, is one of the most curious instances of the way in which the

Arabic names have been mangled. It was originally known as the street of Ben-Gaour-Ali—the son of the infidel Ali. This name was, contrary to custom, retained by the French until 1835, when an order was issued to the inhabitants of Algiers, to restore the names on their houses which had from any cause, of whitewashing or otherwise, become obliterated. In this restoration it happened that Ben-Gaour-Ali, deprived of the first four letters of his name by an artist, who was either not very intelligent, or else possibly an enemy to long words, became Aourali, and was later on, reduced to Orali.

Descending again by the steps in front of the synagogue, and passing through the beautiful Impasse of St. Vincent de Paul to the left, we reach the side entrance of the cathedral church of St. Phillipe, the front of which is in the Place Malakoff. When the French took possession of Algiers, they found in this spot, a handsome though modern mosque, erected in 1794 on the site of a more ancient one, by Pasha Hassan, and usually known by his name.

Very shortly after the conquest, this mosque was converted into a church, the altar being placed so as to cover the ancient mimbar, and the texts of the Koran enjoining constancy in prayer and faith in God, left undisturbed on the vault of the cupola. Since then, the building has little by little, undergone so many alterations, and been the victim of so many improvements, that scarcely a trace of the original structure remains.

The exterior, which is a kind of compromise between Moorish and Christian architecture, is neither beautiful nor well-proportioned.

The façade, which is a perfect square, is surmounted by

an arched centre and flanked by two towers, which, square at the base, become octagonal towards the middle, are capped by insignificant belfries, and present altogether an ungraceful and uncertain appearance.

The entrance, which is approached by a long flight of steps some twenty in number, is adorned by four black-veined marble columns.

The interior of the church is much more pleasing, although architecturally, it presents a curious jumble of styles, and suggests the idea of a halting between two opinions. It has scarcely ceased to be a mosque, and has not decidedly grown into a Christian church—it "shivers on the brink."

The nave rests on a series of horse-shoe arches supported by very handsome white marble columns, the only remains of the older building. The roof and the arches are decorated with arabesque work in stucco, which has a very good effect.

Over the high altar is a dome, and small chapels abut from each side of the nave.

The choir, which is very large, is supported by four antique grey marble columns on porphyry bases. The ancient mimbar of the mosque, of white and variegated marble, now—adorned (?) with a canopy and hangings in the French style—serves as a pulpit.

There is some good modern stained glass in the windows, and the general tone is subdued and chaste.

The chief or rather only object of interest in the cathedral is the tomb of Geronimo, in a chapel to the right of the entrance. The block of concrete in which the remains of the martyr were found at the time of the destruction of

the Fort des Vingt-Quatre Heures, is enclosed in a sarcophagus of white marble, with the inscription—

"Ossa venerabilis servi Dei Geronimo,"

together with the date of the discovery of the relics and their interment in the cathedral. Geronimo has not been canonized by the Roman Church—an omission which is naturally felt to be hard by the French Algerians—but he has received at the hands of the Pope the title of "venerable." In the immediate neighbourhood of the cathedral formerly stood one of the State bagnos, or prisons for slaves, of which we hear so much from old writers (page 96).

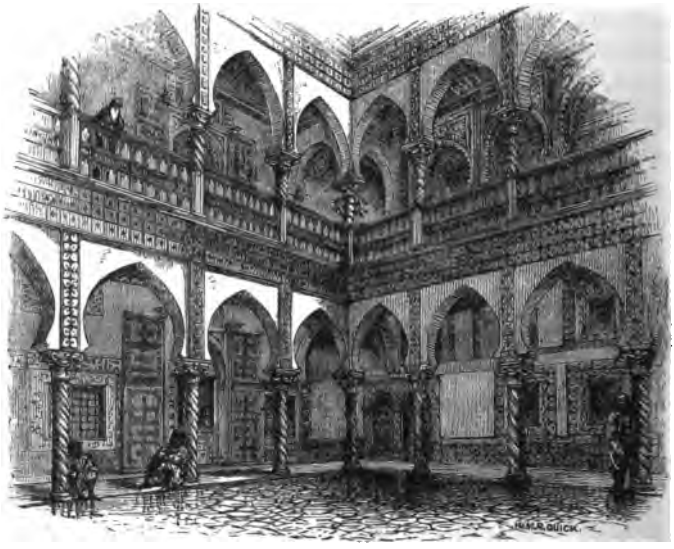
A traveller in 1857 speaks of its demolition:—

"The wretched holes and cells where these poor captives kennelled at night, will in a few months no longer exist. In their present half-destroyed state they exhibit a curious spectacle, and behind them, as shovel and pickaxe do their daily work of desolation, the new cathedral cross is seen more and more plainly, lifting itself high in the air."—*Col. Walmsley's Sketches of Algeria.*

Next to the cathedral is the *Winter Palace of the Governor-General.* It is a fine old Moorish house, to which, by way of adding to its importance and producing a palatial building, a façade of extremely questionable taste has been added. It is chiefly in white marble, with small columns of marble as supports to the doors and windows, which are an attempt at the Venetian style; but the general effect is remarkably clumsy and unpleasing.

The interior court and staircase are very beautiful, the double galleries being supported by spiral columns of white marble, and the walls richly adorned with old delf tiles and delicate carving. Permission to enter is granted on presentation of a visiting card.

Opposite the Palais du Gouverneur is the *Archevêché*, or residence of the Archbishop, which is known among the Arabs as the house of Aziza, daughter of the Bey. It was originally part of that royal palace of Djenina, which, for so many centuries was the seat of Arab and Turkish misrule in Algiers, and to prevent the destruction of which,



Interior, Archbishop's Palace.

M. Berbrugger in the interests of art and archæology, pleaded so pathetically and so uselessly (page 178).

If the whole may be judged by the fragment which remains, the annihilation of the ancient palace is much to be regretted.

This portion of the palace was reserved for guests of dis-

tinction, specially for the Beys of Constantine and Tittery, when they visited the capital for the purpose of paying their annual tribute.

The palace may be visited by strangers any morning before eleven o'clock.

In this part of the town is a perfect cluster of beautiful old Moorish dwellings.

In the Rue Bruce, which is a continuation of the Rue de la Lyre, is to be found, opposite the Hôtel de la Mairie, the Cour d'Appel, well worthy of a visit, while in the Rue l'État-Major (the second turning past the Governor's palace) is the *Bibliothèque Musée*, to reach which, the handsome old entry of the Moorish baths will be passed on the left.

The Bibliothèque was formerly the palace of Mustapha Pasha, the descendant of an old Moorish family in which the title of pasha was, so to speak, hereditary. It is perhaps, not only the handsomest, but the best preserved specimen of the ornate style of domestic Arab architecture now existing in Algiers.

The door gives entrance to a vestibule or *skiffa*. On each side are marble benches, from which spring graceful horse-shoe arches flanked by double marble columns. This is the place where in days of Moorish splendour, the master of the house received his guests and despatched business; "few persons," we are assured, "not even his nearest relations having further admittance, except upon extraordinary occasions" (*Dr. Shaw's Travels in Barbary*).

Beyond the narrow and somewhat gloomy vestibule, a sudden turn, made to conceal its glories from profanely prying eyes, discloses the chief feature of all Arab houses—the courtyard, a spacious square furnished in

the centre with a fountain, and adorned with shrubs and flowers.

The pavement of the court is usually of marble—as in the case of Mustapha Pasha's palace—or of stone or brick, according as the purse or fancy of the owner may dictate. Round the open space is a quadrangular arcade, formed by the pillars and arches which support the galleries. From the lower arcade open out the public rooms and offices of the house. The private dwelling-rooms and the apartments of the ladies are on the upper floor, leading out of the galleries, except in large palaces, where the women occupy a separate quadrangle. The pavement of the court is ordinarily sunk a few inches, so as to allow the rain-water to escape from it easily, and the water itself is stored in a great cistern beneath.

"There is something," writes Dr. Shaw, "very analogous between this open space in Moorish buildings, and the impluvium or cava ædium of the Romans."

It was used by the Moors as the ordinary promenade of the family and the scene of any extraordinary festivities.

"When much people are to be admitted to the house, as upon the occasion of a marriage or the circumcision of a child, the company is never or rarely received into one of the chambers; the court is the usual place for their reception, which is strewed accordingly with mats and carpets for their more commodious entertainment, and to shelter them from the heat of the weather, a kind of veil, as it may be called, is expanded upon ropes, from one side of the parapet wall or lattice of the flat roof, to the other. To this covering, which may be folded or unfolded at pleasure, the Psalmist seems to allude in that beautiful expression, 'Thou spreadest out the heavens like a curtain.'" —*Dr. Shaw's Travels.*

As this part of the house is the usual place for any large assembly, and as it is called by the Arabs *el oust*, the waist

or middle, it is probable that it was in a space of this kind that our Saviour and his apostles were accustomed to teach the people. It was doubtless through the curtain stretched across just such a court, that the anxious bearers of the palsied sufferer let down their burden from the roof "into the midst"—at once into the middle of the house, and into the centre of the eager throng who pressed about the Divine Master and Healer.

Again to quote Dr. Shaw:—

"Of all the arts, that which the Moors understand best is architecture, although their *maallum*, that is to say architects, are only looked upon as artisans, and not as persons who are occupied with a science or liberal art. The method of building in Barbary and the Levant seems to have continued the same without any alteration, from the most early ages. The houses are almost the same as in all Eastern countries, having only the horse-shoe arch as a distinctive mark of nationality. Contrary to the European idea of a dwelling, they cannot be too mean or too unsightly on the outer side, all the adornments being within."

From whitewashed blank walls, cut here and there only at rare intervals by tiny grated windows, and these some ten or twelve feet from the ground, we pass through the dim vestibule, privileged ones that we are, into the heart of the house—the beautiful Moorish court paved with marble, and gay with exotic plants. Here, as in a sanctuary, shielded alike from the glare, the heat, the toil and tumult of the outer world, shaded even from the too brilliant blue of the heavens by the sheltering canopy that stretches from roof to roof, we wander as though in a dream; yielding listlessly to the enjoyment of the scene and moment, caring only to listen to the gentle plashing of the ceaseless fountain in its marble basin, and raising our eyes wistfully to the carved woodwork of the balcony, in the vague hope that

presently, some radiant beauty of the harem may lean her white and jewelled arms upon it, and charm us with the fascination of her deep dark eyes. Presently, as though to break our dream, no harem "light," but a modern Frenchman with a pile of books under his arm, takes the place we have assigned to Fatimah the soft-eyed, and recalls to us the fact, that here at least, a greater than Fatimah has entered in and taken possession.

In this ideal home of the luxurious Turk, the French Bibliothèque and Musée have, since 1838, taken up their abode; and though the space thus afforded is doubtless excessively restricted and inconvenient for the double purpose of museum and library, they could scarcely be placed amid more picturesque surroundings.

Not only is the old mansion of Mustapha Pasha beautiful architecturally, but it is enriched with all the adornments of which Moorish art is capable—painted with vermilion and ceiled with cedar, like the palace of the Hebrew king of old.

The doors of the various rooms leading from the galleries are of cedar-wood.

> "The carven cedarn doors
> Flung inward over spangled floors,
> After the fashion of the time
> And humour of the golden prime
> Of good Haroun Alraschid."

The walls of both galleries and staircases are clothed with delicately coloured tiles, while the balustrade which runs round the balcony is a marvel of exquisite carving, from the hand, it is said, of the same Arab artist who designed the beautiful door, which is now at the entrance of Notre-

Dame des Victoires. The court and ground-floor of the building serve the purpose very inadequately of the museum. The light in the lower chambers is too dim to exhibit the works of art to anything like advantage. The collection of antiquities is not a large one, several remarkable Roman remains found in the neighbourhood having been removed to Paris; but there are a few very good statues more or less mutilated—a torso of Venus, a Bacchus, a statue of Neptune discovered at Cherchel, some beautiful fragments of mosaic pavement, fine marble sarcophagi, and other objects of interest, including a collection of Arab coins now no longer in currency. But the most striking object of interest in the museum is the plaster-cast of the body of the martyred Geronimo, taken by filling in the cavity in the block of concrete, in the same manner as the casts of the buried inhabitants of Pompeii were obtained in the lava. The martyr is lying on his face with his hands bound behind him, just as Haedo has described (page 238). The cords on his wrist and even the texture of his clothing are apparent, and though the features are not very clearly defined, they are sufficiently so for the Arab type of face to be plainly discernible. There is beside in the Musée a very large collection of sepulchral inscriptions, some of which are even supposed to be of Berber origin. Others are undoubtedly Punic, while there are a great number of Roman, Arab, and Turkish epitaphs. There is also a curious and beautiful astrolabe, which was found at Touggourt, and was presented to the museum by General de Neveu. The library, which is on the first gallery of the building, contains upwards of seventeen thousand volumes, with about seventeen hundred Arab manuscripts, the result of the

labours of M. Berbrugger, collected chiefly from Milianah and Constantine. These are now all carefully catalogued, and contain among their number, not only very beautiful specimens of caligraphy, but much valuable and interesting information with regard, especially, to the history and topography of Algeria. There are also a fine collection of maps and charts, and some rare and interesting autographs, among which may be mentioned those of Napoleon I. and Dr. Shaw, the English traveller. The old offices of Mustapha Pacha's palace are now used as store-rooms for books, and the little marabout, or chapel, attached to the house, is appropriately devoted to works of a religious character. The library is open every week-day, from noon till five P.M.

In the Rue de l'Intendance, past the Bibliothèque, first turning to the left, is a remarkably beautiful Moorish house, now used as the Court of Assizes (Cour d'Assises). It has evidently been restored with great taste and care. The rooms which surround the gallery are each of them roofed with small domes, richly ornamented with arabesques, the light being admitted by tiny coloured glass windows. The rooms, galleries, and staircase are also flanked with tiles, and the central court, covered in with glass, becomes a court in another sense, and is fitted up with benches, &c., and a chair of state for the judge.

CHAPTER XV.

AÏSSAOUI FÊTES.—WEDDINGS.—A NEGRO DANCE.

"Quot homines, tot sententiæ."

BEFORE finally quitting the charmed precincts of the Arab town, it will be well to devote a few pages to a description of those extraordinary rites, dissipations, or impostures, whichever they may be—and possibly all three names would equally fit them—called Aïssaoui fêtes, which may certainly claim to be one of the most curious and characteristic spectacles of Algiers, though it is, perhaps, doubtful whether assistance at one of these performances can be justly described as a pleasurable experience. That is, of course, a matter of taste; but those who do not shrink from witnessing the trapèze performances of a circus, the high-rope promenades of M. Blondin, or the sixty-feet leaps of female acrobats, can scarcely, on the score of humanity, take exception at the equally refining and far-less-dangerous-to-life-and-limb exhibitions of the Arab jugglers.

The ruling passion is strong in both—excitement; the enjoyment, it would seem, much of the same kind—a delightfully agitating chance of some terrible catastrophe happening to the performer. The chances of this kind are without doubt on the side of the European acrobat, who thus ministers to the taste of the civilized nineteenth-

century English public. On the other hand, it must be admitted for the Arab, that his wonders, though less likely to be destructive, look worse—might be quoted in a newspaper advertisement as more delightfully horrifying! That which adds considerably to the horror which surrounds them is, that these self-tortures are supposed to have a connection with religion—to be, in short, the result of fanatic inspiration. How far this is the case; how far the Arab Aïssaoui are in truth led away by their own zeal and excitement; how far they are mere vulgar impostors, trading on the credulity of the people; or how far they are recognised *artistes*, ministering to a somewhat morbid and savage taste, it is hard to determine; and probably each spectator takes the view which accords best with his own habit of mind.

The Aïssaoui are a religious confraternity (Khouan), numbering among its members both Arabs, Kabyles, and negroes, and taking its name from its founder, a certain Sidi Mohammed-ben-Aïssa, who flourished in Morocco some two hundred years since, and whose tomb is in Fez. The legends of this saint are numerous. To begin with, he is said to have cast himself down from the top of a high tower without injury. Having thus proved his saintship, he attracted to his person numerous followers. It may be imagined that even at this early period, the vagaries of these holy men were somewhat peculiar, since they were at one time desired by the Sultan of Morocco to leave the country then and there. Ben-Aïssa inquired at what price it might be permitted for them to remain. An impossible sum was named. "It shall be paid," cried the saint, and instantly the tree beneath which he was sitting, sent to the ground a shower of golden pieces, which more than satisfied the

demand. At another time, when he and his disciples were wandering in the desert, food failed them. In answer to the prayer of the prophet however, it was permitted them to use as food all that the desert furnished—stones, sticks, scorpions, poisonous herbs, and even the prickly leaves of the cactus. Blessed with this miraculous appetite, Ben-Aïssa and his followers found the Sahara a perfect larder of delicacies, and the tastes which they cultivated, have been, so it is asserted, preserved by their descendants—the same extraordinary power of digestion being secured to them. This forms the whole secret of their influence as a Mahomedan sect. By an unfortunate coincidence, the name of the founder of the serpent-eating confraternity is the Arabic form of the name Joshua or Jesus—a fact which has been much dwelt on by some writers; but there is, in truth, no reason to imagine that the Arabs in any way confound the head of their fanatical brotherhood with our Lord, or believe that the rites of the Aïssaoui are in any way, however remotely, associated with the Christian religion. The exact translation of the word Aïssaoui would be—curiously enough—Jesuits. Fire-eaters and serpent-charmers have been in repute among Eastern nations from the very earliest ages, and one writer believes—

"The Aïsseoui to be the lineal descendants of the Peylli, a tribe of serpent-charmers of whom Herodotus speaks, and who were in his time reported to have perished, in an expedition which they made into the Great Desert for the purpose of quelling the sirocco, but who existed five hundred years after in the neighbourhood of Cyrenaica, with the reputation of being insect and reptile-proof, and who, in the time of the Antonines, were in repute all over Greece for their skill in curing snake-bites."—*Rev. J. Blakesley.*

The head-quarters of the Aïssaoui are in Morocco,

where their extravagances are perfectly unbridled, if we may judge by the account written of them by a recent traveller in that country :—

"They assert that snakes, scorpions, and all other venomous creatures cannot injure them, and that they therefore handle them with impunity. They also make it appear that they can eat and handle articles on fire, and in these kind of tricks they are very expert.

"On a certain day in the year, they meet early in the morning, at the sanctuary of such town as they inhabit. Here a fire is lighted, and the peculiar orgies of their festival commence. Taking hold of each other's hands, and rapidly tossing their heads backwards and forwards, they dance round the fire with wild shouts and increasing pace. It is said that the chief man among them throws into the fire a dried herb, the fumes of which have an intoxicating effect. If this be so, the herb must be hemp, from which hashish is prepared. But it seems doubtful that any marked effect could be thus produced in the open air; it is far more probable that religious frenzy is answerable for what soon follows. While the mad dance is still proceeding, a sudden rush is made from the sanctuary, and the dancers, like men delirious, speed away to a place where live goats are tethered in readiness. At sight of these animals the fury of the savage and excited crowd reaches its height. In a few minutes the wretched animals are cut or rather torn to pieces, and an orgie takes place over the raw and quivering flesh.

"When they seem satiated, the Emkaddim, who is generally on horseback and carries a long stick, forms a sort of procession, preceded by wild music, if such discordant sounds will bear the name. Words can do no justice to the frightful scene which now ensues. The naked savages—for on these occasions a scanty piece of cotton is all their clothing—with their long black hair, ordinarily worn in plaits, tossed about by the rapid to-and-fro movements of the head, with faces and hands reeking with blood, and uttering loud cries resembling the bleating of goats, again enter the town. The place is now at their mercy, and the people avoid them as much as possible by shutting themselves up in their houses. A Christian or a Jew would run great risk of losing his life if either were found in the street. Goats are pushed out from the doors, and these the fanatics tear immediately to pieces with their hands, and then dispute over the morsels of bleeding flesh, as though they were ravenous wolves instead of men. Snakes are also thrown to them as tests of their divine frenzy, and these share the fate of the goats. Sometimes a luckless dog, straying as dogs will stray in a tumult, is seized on. Then the laymen, should any be at hand, will try

to prevent the desecration of pious mouths. But the fanatics sometimes prevail, and the unclean animal, abhorred by the Mussulman, is torn in pieces and devoured, or pretended to be devoured, with indiscriminating rage.

"Having traversed the principal streets of the town, it is the practice with the Isowa to leave it by a gate opposite to that at which they entered."—*Morocco and the Moors. Dr. Leared.*

Very much the same kind of extravagances took place in Algeria in the time of the old government, and those who in the early days of the French rule witnessed these orgies, assert that at the conclusion of the rites, a live sheep, or some other animal was actually torn in pieces and consumed, wool, entrails, and all, by the maddened savages.

A most horribly thrilling and realistic description of such a scene, which took place at a farm near Blidah in 1845, is given by Théophile Gautier—a description which might well deter any one from becoming a spectator of such horrors; but forty-six years' association with Europeans—or, perhaps, it would be more correct to say, the presence of Europeans in their midst for this length of time—has insensibly produced an effect even upon such an irrational community as the Aïssaoui, and the visitor to these fêtes, though he will assuredly find quite enough in the performances to shock, frighten, and horrify him, need not fear to encounter such a Pandemonium as described by the graphic French writer thirty years ago.

It is commonly believed in Algiers, that the brethren of this remarkable order are able to perform less wonderful feats than formerly—that the power of Ben-Aïssa is, in short, wearing away. If so, so much the better. But is it not rather that the Arab, immovable though he be, has made

during this last half-century, various strides forward in the direction of civilization, and that the Khouan, with all their mad folly, are wise enough to recognise the signs of the times, not caring by any extraordinary excesses, either to draw down the French authorities upon them, or to alienate themselves from the sympathy of their own people? In former days, one week in the year during the fast of Ramadân was given up entirely to the vagaries of the Aïssaouan fraternity, and their most extraordinary exhibitions still take place during the fast-time, for reasons which may readily be imagined, since disordered digestions and hysteria have at all periods of the world's history, had an intimate connection with fanatical excitement.

At the same time it must be understood, that not only are the Aïssaouan extravagances discountenanced by the more intelligent and liberal Arabs, but even by the lower classes they have come to be regarded much more in the light of pleasantly exciting entertainments, than as religious exercises.

The entertainment, which in Algiers is always held in the courtyard of some house in the upper town, begins with prayer.

Here in the centre of the paved space, dimly lighted with a few small candles in tin sconces which flare uneasily in the night air—for these performances always take place after dark—a group of Arabs settle themselves in a circle, and, with immovable faces and hands laid together, like books from which they read, join in a monotonous but musical chant, which has something the nature of a Litany, the priest, or *mokkadem*, giving the first few notes and the rest replying. This is altogether a picturesque and beautiful

scene; the dimly-lighted courtyard with its surrounding pillars and horse-shoe arches, thrown half into relief and half in shade by the uncertain light of the candles, the dim scarcely-defined galleries surrounding the court, along which every now and then some ghostly figure seems flitting, and above all a roof of purple star-lit sky, looking down upon the rapt and earnest faces of the turbaned praying group. There is an air of repose and solemnity about the whole, which little prepares the unwarned spectator for what may follow. After awhile the prayer ceases, and the circle drawing itself out almost in a line, musical instruments are brought in, and the business of the night begins. For musical instruments—instruments of torture rather to those who possess European ears—there are tom-toms, tambourines, iron castanets, cymbals, and a kind of flute, but the drum is the great effect.

M. Gautier in his description of Aïssaouan revels, to which we have referred before, says—

"Connoisseurs complain that Eastern music is barbarous, discordant, and insupportable. They will recognise neither design nor rhythm in it, and make it of no account. At the same time I must confess that it has often produced on me, with its chromatic intervals and sighs, its drawn-out chords and continual repetitions, the effect almost of incantation. These uncertain fretful melodies are like the thoughts of solitude, like the voice of the desert, which speaks to the mind lost in the contemplation of space—they awake infinite yearnings and forgotten memories, they seem to recall in dim and confused vision, the remembrance of some former existence or state of being. While listening to their weird tones I seem to hear, and that not for the first time, the cradle-song of the ancient nurse rocking an infant world."

The conception is more poetical than the reality at close quarters is agreeable, and the account given by an English lady as to her sensations under the infliction of the

Arab harmonies is more true, we venture to think, to nature :—

"For about an hour they subjected us to a torture impossible to describe. Our teeth were slowly drawn one by one, our tympana were beaten and bruised, our flesh was pricked with infinitesimal pins, our nerves were twisted and strained almost beyond endurance."—*A Winter with the Swallows.*

But to every one his own taste, and those who are gifted with the faculty of extracting sentiment from tom-toms and melody from Arab music, should be at least congratulated on being able to draw the poisonous fang from circumstance. As the musicians warm to their work, or as, perhaps, the impatience of the waiting crowd increases, the music grows faster and more furious, and clouds of delicately perfumed incense rise from a little brazier of charcoal in front of the performers, which the priest—the leader of the prayer-party—supplies. The excitement increases, the spectators beat time with their feet and hands, and from the shadowy gallery above the court, come at intervals shrill long-continuing yells—"the unearthliest, cruellest, most horrible applause I ever heard," says the author of "A Winter with the Swallows." In truth one can fancy that such a cry rang through the old arenas of the Pagan world, when Christian saints were hounded to the death. It is the voice of gentle woman too, inciting or exciting to deeds, not glorious.

It comes from the shrouded ghostly forms that throng the upper gallery.

An English visitor writes in 1857—

"For fully an hour did this mad concert continue; and I became

weary of wondering how long it would hold out, when suddenly a young Arab next to me changed the course of my meditations, by administering two or three sharp pokes with his elbow. Turning towards him to remonstrate, I noticed that his features were deadly pale and convulsed, while his limbs were working as though drawn by wires. Uttering two or three sharp yells he at once bounded into the clear space in the centre, and began gesticulating and dancing like a madman. Suddenly approaching the brazier, he inhaled the incense, taking in long breaths of it, but still continuing his capers and gesticulations, until foam and saliva poured from his mouth."—*Col. Walmsley's Sketches of Algeria.*

The dancing of the Aïssaoui, if dancing it may be called, does not affect the limbs to any appreciable extent. It is all done with the head and hands, the head swaying backwards and forwards, and from side to side, with a convulsive movement most painful to contemplate, and which continues for such a length of time, that it seems impossible to believe that human muscles—be they muscles of a fanatic conjurer or what not—can bear the strain. The Aïssaoui are for the most part miserable and emaciated-looking men, with long snaky hair, which, as they knock their heads backwards and forwards, tosses wildly over their face. During their frenzied antics they exhibit every sign of personal suffering; their lips take a blue tinge, their eyes start from the sockets, great drops of heat pour down their wild and haggard faces, yet, inspired as it seems with the demon of perversity, they dance on, every now and then intoxicating themselves with the fumes of the incense over the brazier. Meanwhile orange-flower water is liberally sprinkled among the spectators—a welcome balm for certain griefs which are truly almost unbearable.

It is during the continuance of this monotonous and painful dance, that the Aïssaoui perform the astounding feats

which have gained them so much reputation in the Moslem world. Again to quote Col. Walmsley:—

"The old priest, whose long silver beard reached nearly down to his feet, now approached the dancer, holding by a long handle a large piece of red-hot iron, which he offered to him, but he refused it with horror. The hot iron was therefore returned to the fire. It was offered him a second time. This time, though with motions and groans of horror and repugnance, the man took it in his left hand, several times passing his right hand over the face of the red-hot metal. He really looked a shocking sight as he stood there burning himself, his long hair hanging down his shoulders, his eyes starting wildly, the foam trickling from either side of his mouth, and the most horrible and guttural sounds proceeding from his heaving chest. Quitting his hold of the handle which supported it, he sustained the whole by the grip of his teeth, and thus holding the red-hot mass he walked across the hall to the priest, who took hold of the handle and relieved him of his burden. As he walked, the sickly odour of burning flesh overpowered even that of the subtle incense, and yet no trace of fire was to be noticed on his hands or lips. All at once he threw himself on all-fours, and, furiously howling and growling like a wild beast, made insane dashes and snaps at the spectators, uttering the most horrible noises. I could see as he snapped at me that the man's eyes were open, but they looked dead and inanimate; and the priest now placed in the hand of an old Arab sitting next me, the broad thick leaf of a cactus, covered with long, dangerous spikes. Approaching him, the devotee rubbed his swarthy cheeks against the long spikes, and then, with continued quarrelsome growls and short, sharp snaps, he tore the cactus to pieces bit by bit, eating it like a wild beast. The prickles of the cactus are long, sharp, and irritating. If one enters the flesh it rankles there for days, and yet this man eat it without any apparent precaution. Spikes and leaf alike disappeared, were masticated, and swallowed without seeming to harm him in the least. How this was effected I know not. I have contented myself with noting down simply what passed before my eyes, not once only, but several times, for the kind of temporary insanity which seized upon these devotees was not confined to one or two; indeed not infrequently two were in the arena together, performing their disgusting rites at the same moment, and the priest assured me they would, under the influence of the excitement, eat anything offered them, even as in long days past, they had eaten and been nourished by the stones and sticks of the desert. I saw one man swallow a live scorpion, a small snake, broken glass, nails, and other things."

That there is some jugglery about this part of the performance is sufficiently evidenced by the fact, that not long since, a Khouan died from having actually swallowed a nail!

The fire tricks, though they have the most alarming appearance of all, are no doubt attended with very little danger; the feat of carrying burning coals, red-hot irons, or even a lighted candle in the mouth, is not an uncommon one, even with very bungling domestic sorcerers; the way in which the Aïssaoui seethe and scorch the soles of their feet and the palms of their hands with hot irons, is a much more disgusting process, and to witness it with anything like equanimity, the spectator has continually to remind himself, of what an intelligent Arab observed to the present writer after one of these *séances*—"that they know very well how not to hurt themselves too much."

Another unpleasant "effect" is the sticking of long pins in all parts of the flesh, especially of the face. One infuriated dancer will constantly stick as many as a dozen of these pins into his cheeks, nose, tongue, lips, and eyes. The method of insertion must at least be cunning, for in spite of the apparent torture, not a drop of blood flows. The same may be said of the stabbing trick—a more self-evident "trick" than any—and which by its staginess loses something of its effect. The performer runs a poniard into his side with all his force, hammering it in with a piece of iron or other instrument, so that it seems to enter several inches into his body. His howls and cries of agony are distressing, but after awhile, the dagger being withdrawn with intense effort and apparent disgust by another person, the performer is happily found to be "not killed at all." Some of the more talented of the Aïssaoui are actually able to twist out

their eyeballs from the socket, and replace them without apparent injury or discomfort; but this, the most horrifying and disgusting of all the exhibitions, is reserved for grand occasions, and only takes place when a great "star" sheds his light upon the scene. All the performances are more or less disgusting and savage, none having the smallest approach to the picturesque, except, perhaps, a kind of wild fire dance, during which a man bare to the waist, or covered only by a light muslin shirt, scorches and flays his whole body, with what appears to be a bunch of burning gorse or heather. He introduces it under his muslin shirt, and knocks it about his shoulders very rapidly, until he really looks as though he were wrapped in a sheet of flame, from the midst of which his dark form stands out with a fine effect of light and shadow. As, too, the muslin shirt suffers no ill from the fire, the safety of the performer does not seem greatly endangered.

These exhibitions, which are usually a Sabbath (Friday) evening relaxation, go on through the whole night, each performer continuing his vagaries, always to the ceaseless and monotonous sound of the barbaric tom-toms and cymbals, until he literally falls exhausted—

> "Wearing out life in his religious whim,
> Till his religious whimsey wears out him."

He is usually restored by a kind of kneading process administered with the hands and feet by the mokkadem; and while another maniac dancer takes his place, he settles himself down among the spectators, apparently none the worse for his late exertions. The Aïssaoui fête is an exhibition which certainly few would care to see twice, but in its modified form it may be found interesting as a specimen, or

perhaps it may be fairer to say, as a relic of a barbaric religious service. Mahmoud, the interpreter of the Hôtel d'Orient, is always ready to inform visitors of any native festivities such as Aïssaoui fêtes, marriages, &c., which may be on hand, and to which foreigners may obtain admittance.

Marriage ceremonies, to which ladies alone are admitted since all the festivities take place in the women's apartments, are, when genuine, sufficiently interesting; but the natives are accused—with what justice it is difficult to say—of getting up sham performances of this kind, for the benefit of the wealthy European who is willing to pay for the show. Marriage festivities among the Arabs last a week, during which time the chief amusement is the eating of sweetmeats and the dressing, bejewelling, dyeing, painting, and generally adorning of the bride, who is, as a rule, a girl of some thirteen or fourteen years old, and who is compelled to sit idle and immovable the whole time without showing the slightest interest in anything. She has probably never seen, and has certainly never been seen by, the bridegroom. At the conclusion of the ceremonies the bridegroom is introduced to the women's apartments, and permitted to raise his bride's veil, but etiquette obliges the lady to keep her eyes tightly closed on the occasion, and in some cases the unfortunate young woman's eyelashes are gummed down to her cheeks, to save the possibility of an indiscreet glance. If the face of the bride is displeasing to the bridegroom, he is at liberty after this one glance to reject her. If, on the contrary, he is satisfied, he drinks a few drops of scented water from the bride's hand, offers her the same from his, and the marriage is concluded.

The Arabs and Moors have no kind of public spectacle such as European nations delight in. They have no notion of the drama, and a kind of pantomimic performance in vogue before the conquest, has been, on account of its indecency, suppressed by the French. Story-telling and the recitation of poems are the chief amusements of the native assemblies, to which is sometimes added a dance of Almées, or negresses. These women belong to one particular tribe in the desert, and are considered of the lowest possible caste.

This entertainment is very much of the same kind as the Aïssaoui performance, without its horrifying and painful accompaniments. It is held like the Aïssaoui revel in the open courtyard of one or other of the quaint Moorish houses, the centre of which is reserved for the dancers and the negro musicians, the space beneath the arches being crowded with male spectators, and the galleries furnished as before with ghostly veiled women.

The negro music is, if anything, wilder than the Arab, and would produce who can tell what sensations in the breast of a poetic Frenchman? The negro has several instruments peculiar to himself, of which a kind of guitar or banjo is one; but through all, the great tom-toms, beaten with bent sticks, have the most prominent place, and seem, judging from the broad unchanging grin on the black faces of the executants, to afford an intense delight to the drummer.

A recent artist-traveller gives the following description of the scene :—

"The negresses at first were very slow and irregular in their movements, then, joining in a ring, they swayed and changed places with more and more excitement and rapidity as the tune led them, after a

while falling away, to give one negress, who was a lithe and graceful figure, a more commanding position. She was dressed with more taste than the rest, and had an air of conscious superiority, but there seemed no endeavour on the part of any of the dancers to move with lightness of step; on the contrary, the naked feet beat with distinctness on the marble pavement of the court.

"Monotony is avoided in many ways. Sometimes two or three of the women dance with long spears in their hands, Amazonian fashion; at other times great use is made of a light drapery, probably to give the figures some appearance of angelic lightness; at others, a kind of dumb show is indulged in, with very beautiful grouping of figures and arrangement of dress, the dumb show having reference to the money which is contributed by the spectators for the entertainment, and received by one of the musicians. At one time the dancer would be seated on the marble pavement, the lower part of the body moving most wondrously to the music; at another, a curious and painful mode was to move the head only, and that with great rapidity and for a considerable time, until the performer looked like a person epileptic.

"The whole entertainment is more or less savage; but as the lamp-light leaps to the beat of the drum, as musicians and dancers alike work themselves up into an ecstasy of wide-mouthed joy, as the general excitement increases, the variety of positions and colours of the drapery, the dancing centre, the crowded and more or less delighted audience, the picturesqueness of the architecture, the half gloom, the flickering lamp-light on the enclosed foliage, the moonlight and starlight, the shrieks of pleasure from the upper balconies, the tremendous noise and occasional fury, render the scene most unique."—*J. W. Inchbold.*

When the dancers are weary, they are refreshed by holding the naked feet over a brazier of incense, and sometimes by what is familiarly known among schoolboys, as cold pig.

The sacrifice of a calf, which is cooked and eaten on the premises, usually finishes the day's amusement, for the negro dance, unlike the Aïssaouan, does not shrink from daylight, but generally begins in the morning, and is on some occasions, carried on with scarcely any intermission for seven days and nights, by perpetual relays of musicians and dancers.

CHAPTER XVI.

L'AGHA.—FONTAINE-BLEUE.—MUSTAPHA INFÉRIEUR.—THE ARAB CEMETERY.—THE JARDIN D'ESSAI.

> "Fondly in thought I wing my flight
> Back to those groves and gardens bright."
>
> *Moore.*

THE tramway cars starting from the Place du Gouvernement follow the whole of this route, and beyond to Hussein Dey and the Ruisseau, and will be found very useful, clean, and comfortable. From the Boulevard de la République turn to the left, into the Route de Constantine, a broad new road, the high colonnaded houses of which are only just beginning to be built, and where a solitary palm-tree, its trunk imprisoned beneath the pavement, lifts its head with an air of melancholy grandeur, half defying and half submitting to, the new order of things—a desert-captive pining in the fetters of civilization, and slowly fading away like the race of which it is a symbol, before the onslaught of European energy. Just before passing the city gate, the Bab-Azoun, or, as it is sometimes called, the Passage de Constantine, a steep little lane of only a few yards, leads up to the English church, the front of which is in the Rue d'Isly—on the upper Mustapha road; but on foot this is considerably the shorter way to

the church from the hotels of Algiers. On the incline of the fortification is a koubba, sacred to Abd-el-Kader-el-Djellali, one of many monuments in Algeria erected to the patron of travellers. The tomb of the marabout is in Bagdad, where he died. This koubba is supposed to be built on the spot where he lived and taught when at Algiers. Shortly after passing the fortifications, the female prison, the ancient Lazaretto, will be seen on the left; and one mile beyond the gate the road reaches L'Agha, one of the suburbs of Algiers, where is the first station of the railway, and close by the station some sea-baths, which are much frequented in the summer.

The main road keeps at a little distance from the shore, and is bordered by houses and shops of a low order; it is, in fact, the ordinary faubourg of a provincial French town, with its usual preponderance of wheelwrights, barbers' shops, and cabarets. Yet amid surroundings so unpicturesque, that the brush of a Teniers could scarcely reclaim them from the commonplace, the traveller, journeying along this road, is almost sure to chance upon some quaint bit of Arab life, that brings back more thrillingly than ever before, the loved Bible-stories of his childhood; if not some holy family with Joseph gravely walking at the ass's head, at least some Balaam urging on his beast, although the beast, alas! is silent.

"In the country it is not so much the 'Arabian Nights' as the Bible and the Koran of which you are reminded. Hundreds of texts that brought little or no meaning, as I heard them Sunday after Sunday in my childhood, became suddenly new, and true, and beautiful, thus illustrated. The most trifling incident recalls some beautiful pastoral. The most simple feature in a landscape strengthens some familiar though hitherto imperfect simile. One interprets biblical and Mahometan history by the aid of commentaries wholly new; and as I drove among the olive-clad hills, I was realising much that had hitherto

been myth only. Jacob falling on the neck of Esau and kissing him; the company of Ishmaelites seen by Joseph's brothers, with their camels bearing spicery, and balm, and myrrh; the son of Kish seeking the asses that were lost; David keeping his father's flocks on the hills—all these pictures were photographed in my mind's eye, from life. It is indeed almost impossible to estimate the beauty of such pastorals, and the imagery of such poetry, without their help.

"Who can understand 'the shadow of a great rock in a thirsty land' till he has suffered the heat and blessed the shadow? or how beautiful the spring can be in the South, 'when the rain is past and gone, the voice of the turtle is heard in the land, and the fig-tree putteth forth her tender leaves'? or how much real glory and wealth are suggested by 'the dromedaries of Midian and Epha, the multitude of camels and the flocks of Kedar,' unless he knows something of the primitive and pastoral life of the East?"—*A Winter with the Swallows.*

L'Agha, where there was formerly a camp of janissaries, takes its name from an Arab functionary bearing that title, who was accustomed to receive tribute and administer justice here, under the olive-trees which fronted his palace, "some of which ancient trees," remarks M. Piesse, "have borne more bodies than olives on them."

Mr. Shaler, who was American consul in Algiers at the beginning of this century, and has left an interesting record of his residence, gives a description of a curious ceremony which took place at this spot every spring, "which shows," he says, "the insolent pretensions of the Turks as conquerors:"—

"The lieutenant of the Pacha encamps at this season without the eastern gate of the city. The Agha, who on this occasion represents a native scheich, appears before him as a suppliant to do him homage, and is ordered in an imperious manner to furnish a hundred or more sheep for the refreshment of his troops, and immediately to slaughter one with his own hands for his Excellency's table. These requisitions are instantly furnished, and others of poultry, eggs, couscousou, &c., are successively made and instantly complied with, without a murmur by the obsequious scheich, when he is required to produce a sum of money for the payment of the troops, &c.

"At this demand the Arab demurs, pleads his poverty and various misfortunes which he states put it out of his power to furnish the sum required by his Excellency, though he has all the good-will to do so imaginable. The Hasnagee then affects the highest degree of wrath, threatens to decapitate the Agha on the spot, and finally orders him to be bound and bastinadoed until he produces the sum of money required. This order is put into immediate preparatory execution; the Arab endeavours to capitulate for a smaller sum, but all his expostulation being found of no avail, the elders of his tribe come forward to his relief, and the sum required is made up amongst them and placed at his Excellency's feet. The latter then assumes an air of the utmost amenity, gives the scheich his hand to kiss, styles him his friend, places him by his side, and treats him with coffee, &c.

"Thus ends this yearly farce, which is indeed a faithful representation of the Government of Algiers in its relations with the natives."—*Sketches of Algiers, by W. Shaler*, 1816.

At L'Agha two roads diverge; one, the upper, leading to Mustapha Supérieur, the other, the lower, to Mustapha Inférieur. We follow the latter. Half a mile further on, passing on the right the remains of an ancient Roman aqueduct, consisting of two tiers of arches, we reach the great open space known as the Champ de Manœuvres, stretching away almost to the sea, on which troops are continually being exercised, and which, it is said, is large enough for a review of twenty-five thousand men (*Murray's Guide*).

Horse-races, in which amusement both Arabs and French enter with spirit, take place here in the spring.

The rising ground to the right of the Champ de Manœuvres, which is covered with villas and gardens, is known as Fontaine-Bleue, from a beautiful old Arab fountain (now disused) in a lane to the right of the road, which was originally painted a bright blue colour. A little further on is Mustapha Inférieur, a collection of French villas and houses, which slope gradually up from the road,

with here and there an old white-walled Moorish palace blinking out from its encircling belt of trees, like one whom death has forgotten, and left sightless, silent, and alone, among an alien race.

At every step we take away from the city, the rich beauty of the Algerian vegetation attracts us more and more.

"What strikes those who come to Algiers for the first time, is the dark green vegetation. This *vert sombre* is conspicuous throughout the three provinces, even in winter. The flower-grown grass, which is spread like a variegated carpet over the land, wherever the invading growth of trees allows patches of the ground to be seen, is almost as deep in tint as the foliage of a northern wood."—*Algeria as It Is.*

The whole of this road is bordered with eucalyptus, an Australian tree introduced into Algeria by the patriotic exertions of Messrs. Rammell, Cordier, and Trottier, to whom the country owes a large debt of gratitude, since this tree, from its peculiar power of absorbing miasma, has proved, and in its further cultivation is likely to prove, a most invaluable agent in rendering healthy, tracts of country which would otherwise be unfit for colonization.

The eucalyptus, which is surely destined to play an important part in future schemes of colonization in various parts of the world, is of the myrtle tribe. There are said to be no fewer than one hundred and fifty species of the tree—two kinds, the red-gum *resinifera* and the blue-gum *globulus*, having been chiefly and most successfully cultivated in Algeria. The blossom is like a shower of snow.

The tree has an extraordinarily rapid growth, an increase of six to nine feet yearly being by no means uncommon, and it attains an enormous height.

The introduction of the eucalyptus into Algeria dates

only from 1862, yet there are now computed to be no less than two million of these trees in the country, each from fifty to sixty feet high.

In 1862, it is said, an Australian merchant wished to send to the London Exhibition a specimen of the large-growth eucalyptus, but no ship could be found long enough to carry the giant.

The wood is most valuable for building purposes, besides which we are assured that "soaps, perfumes, lozenges, court-plaster, liniments, syrups, pomades, toilet vinegars, as well as many preparations used for artistic purposes, such as varnishing oils, veneer and tracing-paper, are obtained from different parts of the tree." There is already established in Paris, a depôt for the sale of eucalyptus perfumery.

But by far the most valuable and important property of the eucalyptus is its anti-febrile quality—due, no doubt, to the aromatic oil which it contains—a quality which has been abundantly proved in various low-lying or marshy districts of Algeria, as most beneficial to life and health, and as to which, looking at the early history of the colony, one can only deeply regret that its value was not sooner known or more generally appreciated.

At Mustapha Inférieur, in an old house approached by a fine avenue of mulberry-trees, is the civil hospital, capable of accommodating about five hundred patients, and under the care of the sisters of charity. On the right, two miles and a half from Algiers, is the koubba of Sidi Mahommed ben Abd-er-Rahman, a marabout of Algiers who flourished under Mustapha Pasha (1798—1805). He was the founder of a purely national sect or confraternity, to which vast numbers both of Arabs and Kabyles attached themselves;

and so great was the reputation of the order, that at the time when Abd-el-Kader was striving to establish an empire, he thought it worth his while to enrol himself as a member of it. This marabout has acquired the title among Arabs of "the man of two tombs" from the following legend:—Shortly before his death, Mahommed ben Abd-er-Rahman left Algiers and established himself among a Kabyle tribe—the Beni Ismail. On the news of his death the Algerines sent certain of the confraternity to fetch home the body of their saint, a task which was successfully accomplished, and it was buried on the spot where the koubba has been erected, and where Mahommed had probably lived and taught. When the Kabyles found that the tomb in which they had laid the holy man whom they equally claimed, had been violated, they were roused to furious indignation, but were appeased on finding, after further examination, that the body of the marabout remained intact. The Arabs were equally happy in possessing the relics of the saint at Mustapha. To prevent discord, the body of the pious Mussulman, like that of certain Christian saints, had been, so it was said, miraculously doubled!

Attached to the koubba is a wild, somewhat overgrown, and yet not wholly neglected spot, used as the Arab cemetery. A few of the graves have flowers planted upon them, but not many. Here and there, sprigs of myrtle are laid across the flat stone which usually covers the sepulchre, and at the head of the grave are two little hollows or bowls, which the friends of the lately dead fill, the one with water and the other with kous-kous, whether for the sustenance of the departed or as a fee to Charon, it is difficult to know. It is most probably a remnant of the old fetish worship.

But the Mahomedans are said to believe that every Friday the spirits of the dead hover about the place of their bodies' last home, which has given rise to the Mussulman custom of visiting the graveyards on this day of the week.

Every Friday afternoon during the service at the mosque, which by the law of the Prophet women under sixty are not permitted to attend—an age which no Arab lady has yet been known to pass—the veiled figures crowd to the cemetery, the lower Mustapha road being thronged with them, both on foot and in the omnibuses, or coricolos, as they are locally called, which are so largely affected by the Arabs.

Any Friday afternoon, a crowd of these vehicles, which seem to be hired specially by the Arab ladies, may be seen waiting outside the gate of the burying-ground, while the ground itself presents a most picturesque and singular scene. On first entering but one idea strikes the beholder—the dead have in truth risen, to visit once more the scene of their interment. At each carved head-stone sits a figure, or it may be two or three, draped alike from head to feet in white and shining raiment—spots of light, thrown out in strong relief from a sombre background of cactus-hedge and aloes, still, and white and silent, as ghosts should be. The impression is irresistible. The train of yellow omnibuses outside the garden gate is forgotten, possibilities and probabilities melt away as by touch of the enchanter's wand, and the stranger, advancing with soft footsteps upon the weird unearthly scene, can but remember the old Mahomedan superstition, and wonder, with an involuntary shudder, if by chance a veil is raised, what will there be to meet his awed and fascinated gaze?

Gradually, as he approaches, the horror passes away; voices fall upon his ear, little children—quaint little creatures bagged and turbaned—run across his path, and now, as he nears a radiant group, a plump and henna-tinted hand is raised to put aside a veil, a pair of grand black eyes fix on him a look of mortal fascination, a pair of full red lips open to smile upon him—the angels are but women after all! The *him* is used advisedly, supposing that the pronoun apply to an European gentleman, for the Arab code of etiquette does not prove so harsh in this matter towards a Giaour, as it does towards a man of Eastern race; and though an Englishman wandering in the Arab cemetery on the women's day, is likely to have an evil eye laid upon him here and there, by prudish fingers, the chances are in his favour towards being permitted a very fair sight of Moorish beauty.

European ladies are gladly welcomed among the Arab belles, and though few of them speak any other language than their own Arabic, an animated intercourse is readily kept up by the mutual display of dresses and jewels; an Englishwoman's toilette being, naturally, quite as interesting and curious an object of scrutiny to a Moorish lady, as her own rich and beautiful costume is to an unenlightened European. And on these occasions the Arab women are sure to be adorned in their richest dresses, and tricked out with all the jewellery of which they are possessed, for it is in truth their only opportunity of displaying either to the outer world; and their weekly visit to the tombs is regarded, and naturally so, since it is the only recreation permitted them, as a festa.

M. Fromentin writes—

"It is seldom that on these days the field of Sidi Abd-er-Rahman is not enlivened by conversation and gay laughter. Indeed, converse is not the only amusement indulged in. Haiks are spread across tombs in the guise of table-cloths, and the sepulchral stones serve at once for seats and tables, where in little groups, confectionery and pastry of various kinds are discussed.

"Brilliant toilettes are displayed, some really magnificent, for these are occasions when antique coffers are emptied of their treasures of precious stones and perfumes, when jewels hang in masses on neck and arms, fingers, feet, corsage and waist, when a wealth of art is bestowed on the shades of eyes and eyebrows."—*Une Année dans le Sahel.*

Before sunset, veils have been resumed, adjars tightly tied across faces, and the whole bevy of fair dames will have melted away.

An Arab funeral is interesting to those to whom Eastern customs are a novelty. The body is laid in the grave bound in grave-cloths—as Lazarus was—without any coffin; and the wailing of the mourners—"the minstrels and the people making a noise"—is singularly suggestive of that tumult of grief, which greeted Christ on his entrance into the ruler's house, where the maid lay dead. The wail is a most melancholy and thrilling sound. It is begun by the hired mourners, and caught up by the whole company, who prolong and intensify it almost as a dog howls.

A little further down the road is the entrance to the *Jardin d'Essai*—the botanical gardens of Algiers—covering a space of about two hundred acres (*Murray's Guide*).

Opposite the principal entrance to the garden, is a beautiful old Moorish fountain in white marble, beside which, some years ago, was a picturesque *café maure*, built over the remains of an old Roman aqueduct. This has now been supplanted by a French café—a favourite resort of holiday-makers—half hidden, like the fountain, by a group of fine

plane-trees. Behind this fountain and café, on the steep slope of the Sahel, is an annexe of the Jardin d'Essai, devoted entirely to the growth of forest trees. It is scarcely ever visited, and has almost the grandeur and luxuriance of a virgin forest. The ground is a mass of creepers and wild flowers, and the trees, planted thickly together, interlace their branches into a hundred natural arcades and bowers, while, as the traveller mounts the steep hill-side, they frame-in exquisite and constantly changing peeps of blue sky and sea. The trees are chiefly of Australian growth, such as the eucalyptus, acacia, araucaria, among which the evergreen oak, the sombre pine, and lordly cedar are not wanting. The whole is crowned by a beautiful pine-wood, in which is an old Moorish palace. This side of the garden should be taken as a distinct and separate walk; as when the summit of the hill is reached, the pedestrian, instead of retracing his steps, can return to Algiers by the bridle-path which leads from Birmandreis to Mustapha, and which passes close to a large Arab farm at the top of the hill. Following this road to the right, a rapid descent will be found to Fontaine-Bleue, and thence to the Champ de Manœuvres. The Jardin d'Essai, or d'Acclimatation, was begun in the year 1832, for the cultivation of all plants and trees which could be produced in Algeria. It has been gradually enlarged and extended, and in the year 1867, it was leased by the Government to the Compagnie Générale Algérienne for forty-nine years, at the nominal rental of £40.

"The convention passed between it and the Government, stipulated that it was to have a capital of one hundred millions of francs, to be devoted exclusively to industrial and agricultural works, the exploitation

of mines and forests, the erection of barrages and irrigational canals, the establishment of manufactories, &c. It was to lend a further sum of one hundred millions of francs, to be applied in similar works of public utility, and the Government made over to the company one hundred thousand hectares (two hundred and fifty thousand acres) of the best land in the colony at the nominal rent of one franc a hectare per annum during fifty years. It was understood that it was to colonise and people this land. Little, however, has been done in that respect, the society having done little more than re-let it to the Arabs."—*Murray's Guide.*

The company endeavours to combine a successful commercial enterprise, with the claims both of science and pleasure. The garden has perhaps, somewhat too much the air of an enormous nursery-ground; and the extreme flatness of the land on which it is laid-out militates considerably against its picturesqueness. But it contains an extremely beautiful and varied collection of tropical plants; and an attempt has been made at ornamentation, by the introduction of a small artificial lake, which is covered with water-lilies. A little island in the centre is the home of some rare water-fowl; and a scheme was set on foot to combine a zoological with the botanical garden. The idea has been abandoned for the present, though there are still a few gazelles and llamas, also some ostriches and other birds domiciled in various parts of the garden. But the great glory of the garden is its avenues, in which form the trees are planted throughout. A great avenue of giant bamboos traverses the whole width of the plantation, forming a grand arcade, impenetrable to the rays of the fiercest sun, along the course of which are placed numerous seats; but it would, perhaps, be well for the visitor, especially if he be heated with walking, to abstain from the perilous advantage thus offered. The shade of the bamboo

is always more or less dangerous, and especially so towards sun-down. The old Italian proverb—*Dove non va il sole va il medico*—holds good equally on the southern side of the Mediterranean. And, indeed, it would be advisable for

Grove of Palms in Jardin d'Essai.

persons easily susceptible of fever, to visit the Jardin d'Essai in the early part of the day, or, at least, not to linger there until sunset, as the land lies low, and the immense mass of foliage is apt to produce miasma. A great avenue

of plane-trees leads through the garden from the principal entrance, and from its central point various other avenues radiate; but, perhaps, the most striking and beautiful of any of these grand alleys, is the grove of palm-trees, which, in a line parallel with the plane-trees, stretches, in a double row of delicate feathery crowns, from one end of the garden

Oasis de Sainte Marie.

to the other. The grand avenue of *Ficus elasticus*, too, must not be forgotten; giant trees these, with trunks three or four yards in circumference. Indeed, knowing this tree as we do, only by its very smallest specimens, potted in our greenhouses and treasured in our windows, under the homely name of the india-rubber plant, we are more struck

in this world of tropical vegetation, by finding our old familiar friend with such an altered face, than by any marvels of strange exotics with which we are unacquainted. After having wandered at will through this wonderful Brobdingnagian garden, which may be done either on foot or in a carriage, for the drive goes entirely round it—pass through it to the road which borders it on the sea-ward side—the Route de Constantine. On the other side of this road is a charmingly picturesque group of date-palms, known as the Oasis de Sainte Marie, more beautiful, though as individuals less remarkable, than the cultured avenue of the garden. Dwarfed and twisted by the rough sea-breezes, they have yet, in their wild and untaught beauty, a grace and charm which the most perfect symmetry of artistic arrangement lacks.

From this point is one of the most striking views of the town.

"Westward, Algiers appears in profile, descending step by step from the summit of her steep incline, till her white feet touch the water. El-Bahadja—*La Blanche* the Arabs call her, and truly the name suits her even now, dishonoured though she be. The high defence of her ancient Turkish ramparts, that gleaming white girdle that encircled her, is broken through and cast down; the upper city has lost her minarets—even here some modern roofs peep out. Every nation of the world now moors its ships of war or merchandise at the foot of the grand old mosque. . Bordj-el-Fennar has lost its terrors. No matter; Algiers will always be the capital and true queen of the littoral, with her Kasba for crown—her Kasba, with a lean, solitary cypress, last remnant of the inner garden of the Dey, rising up in the sky like a dark thread, or which from afar resembles the aigrette on the royal turban.

"Let be what will, she is, and may she long remain, El-Bahadja—the whitest city of the East."—*Une Année dans le Sahel.*

On this spot, and on the site of the Jardin d'Essai, the

army of Charles V. disembarked at the time of that emperor's disastrous expedition in 1541 (page 87).

The Emperor, we are told—

"Believed so firmly in the success of his enterprise, that to avoid bloodshed, before disembarking his troops, he summoned the Algerines to deliver up their city. One of his officers, Don Lorenzo Manuele, appeared at the gate Bab-Azoun bearing a white flag and demanding an audience of the Dey. Don Manuele briefly explained his mission. 'The Christians were come,' said he, 'to chastise the pirates. The Emperor of Spain, with an immense fleet had arrived, and was about to take possession of the country.' He therefore advised the Bey to give up the city quietly, promising in the Emperor's name, to the Turks their lives and safe passage from the country, and to the Moors freedom to exercise their religion.

"To this lofty address the Dey replied, that he, too, had confidence in God."—*Histoire de la Conquête de l'Algérie. A. Fillias.*

The troops then disembarked on the 23rd of October, and bivouacked at Hamma (the Jardin d'Essai and the Café des Platanes). The heat was overpowering.

The next day, one division of the army marched to the heights above the city, carrying with them a siege-train, ladders, and all appliances for taking the town by storm; meanwhile the Admiral, Doria, drew up his ships in line of battle. To quote the French historian—

"The attack was well arranged; the advanced guard occupied an excellent position, the other two corps intercepted all communication between the town and the interior, while the guns of the fleet were prepared to complete the ruin of the city, added to which the troops were filled with ardent religious enthusiasm. Charles V. might well believe himself sure of success."

But it was not so to be.

On the afternoon of the 25th sudden clouds obscured

the sky, and a strong north-westerly wind began to blow. To an astonishing heat, succeeded sharp cold and heavy rain; the gale increased, and at sunset rose to a furious storm.

Durand de Villegaignon, a contemporary historian, relates that—

"The Emperor had taken all the precautions which human prudence could suggest, and the army was giving itself up to rejoicing on its happy success, when an event occurred which it was impossible to foresee or avoid. At the first hour of the night, a terrible flood of rain began and continued throughout the course of it. The soldiers had disembarked without furnishing themselves with any shelter. They had neither mantles to secure themselves against the cold, nor tents, and their courage seemed to go from them with their strength. During the night the sea began to rage in an incredible manner. Such was its agitation, that many ships too feeble to resist its violence, broke their cables and were dashed on the shore or sank to the bottom."

When morning dawned the Emperor saw from the heights above the city, the wrecks of a hundred and fifty of his ships lying upon the strand. At this moment of discouragement, the Turks sallied out and attacked the Spaniards. A desperate struggle ensued, which ended in a general rout of the Spanish army, whose only ambition now was to regain the scattered remnant of their fleet. But for three days the storm continued with scarcely any abatement; and without shelter, and without food, their gunpowder spoiled by the rain, and their spirits crushed by disaster, they were harassed on all sides by the now triumphant Turks.

"The soldiers, enervated by fatigue and disappointment, seemed to have lost all strength, and many fell dead by the wayside from exhaustion. The ground was so spongy that they could neither lie nor walk upon it without great difficulty, and when they desired repose, they

could only plunge their lances into the earth and so lean on them."—*L'Expédition de Charles V. Villegaignon.*

After incessant marching and countermarching, they at length reached the shore at Cape Matifou. Even then Cortez, the conqueror of Mexico, who was in the expedition, and the Count d'Alcandete, proposed to return and renew the attack on Algiers; but the Emperor, we are told, unwilling that others should succeed where he had failed, gave the order for the immediate embarkation, and on November 3rd the Spanish fleet set sail from the bay, leaving in the hands of the Arabs an immense quantity of booty and six thousand prisoners.

On the sea-shore, a few yards beyond the Jardin d'Essai, half buried in the sand, is the little koubba of Sidi Belal. There are different traditions extant as to this personage, who is held in much honour by the negro population of Algiers. Some believe him to have been that Belal, the black slave of Mahomet, who was the first negro converted to Islamism. More probably, thinks M. Piesse, the name recalls to the negro mind, some fond remembrance of the old Phœnician god Belal, Belus, Baal, since the Mahomedan negroes have never thoroughly emancipated themselves from the traditions and practices of idolatry. The rites which are yearly celebrated at the koubba of Sidi Belal, certainly seem to savour of heathenism, consisting of prayers, incantations, sacrifices and dances, in the course of which the excited devotees, both men and women, have the habit, we are told, of throwing themselves headlong into the sea, from which they are often, with difficulty, rescued by their companions. This takes place every spring, and is known as

the Feast of Beans—beans forming a prominent part of the banquet, into which the religious frenzy finally resolves itself.

A short way further down this road is Hussein Dey, so called from a summer palace belonging to the last Dey, which was situated here, and is now a tobacco manufactory. From this point either tramway or train can be taken back to Algiers.

CHAPTER XVII.

MUSTAPHA SUPÉRIEUR.—THE COLONNE VOIROL, AND WALKS FROM THENCE.

> "Nature smiled, and o'er the landscape threw
> Her richest fragrance and her brightest hue."
>
> *Rogers.*

Omnibus to Mustapha Supérieur every hour, from the corner of the Place du Gouvernement.

FROM the Place Bresson, passing in front of the Hôtel de l'Europe, the Rue Rovigo begins the ascent of the hill, which, continued by the Rue d'Isly, leads to the town-gate of that name. On the road, the Place d'Isly will be passed—an open space, in the centre of which stands a bronze statue of Marshal Bugeaud, the victor of Isly, by M. Dumont. This quarter is quite modern, and anything but picturesque, only relieved from dreariness by the quaint figures and unlovely features of the old negresses, whose enormous black eyes glare at the passer-by, as they crouch over their baskets of bread and fruit. They possess the attraction of pug-dogs and Dandy Dinmonts—the beauty, because the absolute perfection, of ugliness—that is according to our notions; but they may (who knows?) think the same thoughts of the daintily clad, fair-skinned English or French women, who regard them almost with an involun-

tary shudder. It should surely be a matter of constant gratitude and rejoicing to all of us in this world that tastes differ.

This part of the town was the old faubourg without the gates, of which Pierre Dan tells us, where the Arab and Moorish merchants, with their camels, were accustomed to encamp when bringing provisions into the city.

Just before arriving at the handsome Porte d'Isly, will be seen on the left, the English church, a neat little building which was erected by the English visitors and residents, the ground being presented by the Government, at a cost of about £2,500. It was consecrated on January 1, 1871. There is still a considerable sum of money left unpaid. The interior of the building is at present simply whitewashed, and has an extremely bare and glaring effect; but a plan of decoration is mooted, and the munificence of the English visitors will, no doubt, soon enable it to be carried into effect.

The pulpit, font, and stained-glass windows were all presents. The large circular window at the west end of the church, representing the release of St. Peter from prison, with the inscription, "Lord, show thy pity upon all prisoners and captives," was put up by subscription, in memory of the English who died as slaves at Algiers; and a memorial window has recently, chiefly through the exertions of the present Consul, been erected to the celebrated traveller Bruce, whose name will be found in the list of English Consuls preserved on the wall of the church. There is also a marble tablet recording the glorious victory of Lord Exmouth on August 27, 1816, by which Christian slavery was for ever put an end to, and one or two other commemorative tablets.

The fortifications passed, the road runs for some little distance in a parallel line with the lower Mustapha road, having on the right a hill scattered over with villas, which is known by the name of the Cité d'Isly. Soon the road begins to ascend, cutting the slope of the Sahel in a continual zigzag, until a mile and a half from the Porte d'Isly, the most attractive and aristocratic suburb of Algiers is reached — Mustapha Supérieur. It is here that what is known as the English colony has its head-quarters. Nearly all the houses, though now inhabited by wealthy residents or English visitors, are old Moorish palaces surrounded by their gardens, of the beauty of which we hear a good deal from old travellers.

"In a circle of eight or ten leagues from the city one can count no fewer than eighteen thousand gardens or villas."—*Pierre Dan*, 1649.

"The immediate vicinity of Algiers is supposed to contain no less than twenty thousand vineyards and gardens," says Pananti, 1812—14.

Peyssonnel, the French traveller, writes in 1725—

"All the hills are well cultivated; there are great quantities of vines and fruit-trees, which yield a plentiful supply of good fruit, but according to the Turkish fashion, the trees are planted without order or regularity. On the hills are many beautiful country houses, called here *masseries*, which afford exquisite points of view. They are not surrounded with walls, but the separation of the different plots of ground, is made with hedges of cactus, and enormous aloes which produce flowers whose blossom rises to a height of fifteen or twenty feet. It is said that there are twenty thousand of these palaces, but I think those who have made the calculation have added a figure to it, and that it should be *two* thousand instead of twenty."—*Voyages de M. Peyssonnel.*

"The Turkish houses rise here and there among the trees at a very little distance the one from the other, but so well surrounded and isolated by trees that they have the air of each one possessing a park. All are built in picturesque situations on the wooded incline of the Sahel, and all have a grand and beautiful view of the sea.

"To-day, without exception, they are occupied by Europeans. The

mystery which once surrounded them is no more, and much of their charm has gone with it.

"Inhabited by the people who built them, I might say dreamed them, these dwellings were at once a creation both poetic and ingenious. Now they are without meaning.

"The Turks absolutely studied the art of making prisons places of delight—of cloistering their women in impenetrable but entrancing convents.

"The gardens resemble the playthings which are designed for the amusement of the Arab woman, that singular being whose life, whether it be short or long, is but a lengthened-out infancy: little sanded alleys formed into mazes, fountains of curious workmanship, bowers of jasmine or vine, that shut in more effectually than stone walls!

"These prisons have in reality no boundaries. The country penetrates to them up to their very walls, the tops of the trees touch the windows, the odour of the orange-grove surrounds them—within and without all is perfume.

"But we, with our modern ideas, can understand nothing of the mysteries or the delights of such an existence. The silence, the immobility, the luxury, nay the very beauty of the scene, would for us but add another ever-new horror to the sense of captivity."—*Une Année dans le Sahel.*

Yet whether anachronisms or not, these houses are picturesque and beautiful in the extreme; and in their shadowy and luxurious seclusion, with their groves of orange and lemon trees, their overshadowing cypresses and ceaseless drip of fountains, they seem, in truth, rather the result of climatic influences, than the expression of any special code of manners.

The glory of the vegetation which surrounds them, is after all their greatest charm, in the eyes of one coming from the chilly North. To see poinsettias—those cherished darlings of the English hothouse—growing in great bushes in January gardens, to wander under the shade of magnolias and pepper-trees, to be pursued by the perfume of orange-flowers, to be surrounded by walls of myrtle and geranium-

bush—these are delights which surely "must be felt to be appreciated."

The most beautiful of the country houses of this suburb, that from which it takes its name, is the palace of Mustapha, the last Dey but three, now used as the summer residence of the Governor-General. The sums which Mustapha expended upon the erection of this palace, formed the ground of grievance which the janissaries found against him, and led to his disgrace and death.

Mustapha, unlike many of his predecessors, is said to have been a man of good character and large heart, administering justice with an even hand. In spite of this, or, perhaps, rather on account of it, and in spite of the lavish generosity with which he had expended his large private fortune in the hope of retaining popularity, he excited the animosity of his tyrannical subjects, the janissaries, who in consequence doomed him to death. He was assassinated in the streets of Algiers as he, with his favourite ministers, was attempting to gain the refuge of the Mosque Sidi Wali.

"That he did not entirely fail in obtaining a good name, nor merited his tragic fate from the objects of his generous bounty," says Mrs. Broughton, "the many stories I have heard of his great good-nature testify." He it was who made the fortune of the last Dey, Hussein, by buying him from some Neapolitan fishermen who had captured him, and afterwards appointing him his secretary.

Again to quote Mrs. Broughton :—

"As evil eyes without number had cast their spell upon this luckless palace, it was determined that its marble halls should never more be tenanted by a royal host, lest he should be tempted to take the *fantasia* of imagining himself perchance a sovereign indeed, instead of being, as

was the determination of his loyal subjects, a mere puppet in their hands, the creature of their Hydra will. The deserted mansion of their murdered master was therefore, subsequently bestowed on the representative of their *Buono Amigo el Rey Giorgio.* The first British consul who occupied it, was that Mr. Falconer celebrated for his gymnastic performances, and who was generally known as the 'Mad Consul.'"

It was afterwards, when French influence was in the ascendant with the Dey, occupied by the French consul; for, says Mrs. Broughton—

"The French and English consuls had ever, at the Algerian court, enacted much such a part as the lady and gentleman in the old-fashioned cuckoo clock, the one being invariably in the background, in proportion as fair weather favoured the other."

For some years after the French conquest Mustapha Dey's garden-house was used as a barrack.

Lieut. Lamping, a soldier of the Foreign Legion in 1841, writes—

"Mustapha Supérieur, which was formerly the palace of the Dey's son, now serves us for a depôt. It is built on a declivity of the Sahel about a league from Algiers, and is surrounded by most exquisite fruit gardens. Traces of the former splendour of this palace still remain, notwithstanding the ravages of the soldiery. It is built round two large courts, the smaller of which is adorned with sixty-four marble columns, supporting most splendid rooms which were formerly inhabited by the Prince's seraglio, but are now turned into workshops for a whole company of shoemakers and tailors."—*The French in Algiers. Translated from the German by Lady Duff Gordon.*

Marshal Bugeaud first made this palace his summer residence, and later governors have each added something towards the embellishment of the buildings or grounds, until, as at present, it may fairly be said to be a palace of fairy beauty.

"The palace is entirely Moorish, and stands in gardens which may well be called a realm of pleasure abounding in—

'Many a shady chequered lawn
Full of the city's stilly sound,
And deep myrrh thickets blowing round
The stately cedar, tamarisks,
Thick rosaries of scented thorn,
Tall orient shrubs and obelisks.'

Sultry as it was this April day, we found grateful shade under the orange-trees laden alike with fruit and flower, and cool breaths of air beside fountains overhung with myrtle and oleander, and the delicate fruit and foliage of the lemon; while the fairy-like palace of which we caught a glimpse now and then, made us fancy ourselves in the golden age of Seville or Grenada, as portrayed to us by Moorish poets.

"The same features characterize Moorish architecture everywhere—an airiness of construction, a minuteness and floridness of detail, space, loftiness, and light in plenty, and a constant regard to privacy and seclusion. If the garden is difficult to describe with its thickets of myrtle and rose, its fountains and basins of pure marble, its groves of palm and pomegranate, its terraces of brilliant flowers and wonderful vistas of greenery, how much more difficult is the palace!

One feels unable to give any idea of those light colonnades, those marble pillars, those gorgeous pavements, those ceilings rich in flowery arabesques, those pleasant courts with rippling fountains and overhanging trees, those doors and domes and arches of burnished wood and gold. You wander about feeling that you are in Kubla Khan's pleasure house, and loath to leave a scene so new and so enchanted."—*A Winter with the Swallows.*

It is perhaps disappointing, to be reminded that a great deal of the decoration of the summer palace is quite modern. Permission to view the palace and grounds is to be obtained by presentation of a visiting card at the town palace of the Governor in the Place Malakoff.

The road, which can only be compared to the famous Corniche, continues to wind about the face of the hill amidst the most delightful gardens and habitations, which, as the French say, *font rêver*. Three miles from Algiers,

on the highest point of the road, is a column, *la Colonne Voirol*, with the inscription—

ROUTE DE BIRKHADEM,
EXÉCUTÉE EN 1834
PAR L'ARMÉE FRANÇAISE,
SOUS LE COMMANDEMENT DU GÉNÉRAL VOIROL.

LE 10E LÉGER,
LES 4E, 13E ET 67E DE LIGNE,
LE 3E BATAILLON D'AFRIQUE,
LA LÉGION ÉTRANGÈRE,
ONT OUVERT CETTE ROUTE SOUS LA DIRECTION
DU GÉNIE MILITAIRE.

It must be admitted that the *génie*, of which we hear so much from the French Algerians, and which in many instances has proved itself a very destructive evil-eyed "genius," tearing down all that was picturesque and time-honoured, for the sake of its miserable *alignements*, shines with a real lustre as a road-maker.

Whatever the French have done in Algeria which they should not have done, or left undone which they should have done, the roads which they have constructed all over the country, are works of which they may justly be proud. What the means of communication between places were before the French conquest, we may judge by such of the Arab lanes (*chemins vicinals*, as they are now termed) which still exist. Charmingly picturesque and utterly inconvenient bridle-paths, scarcely broad enough to permit two laden animals to pass; walled in by luxuriant hedges that for the most part shut out all view; climbing the hill-sides in eccentric irregular fashion, paved here and there with great blocks of rock, which form a series of rough steps, each, perhaps, a foot or more in height; they seem formed

rather to divide place from place, than to be the means of communication between them. The first thought, then, of the French was to open out the country by making direct, even, "carrossable," roads. The first days which the army passed on Algerine soil were spent, curiously enough, not in fighting, but in road-making, and since then, by means of military and penal labour, the whole country has been dissected by broad straight lines commanding an uninterrupted view on all sides, fit for the march of an army, and along which artillery could sweep with deadly effect. And to these roads the French doubtless owe much of the stability of their position in Algeria, since nothing disconcerts a people apt at carrying on guerrilla warfare so completely, as the ready means of conveying a large force from place to place without fear of surprise or ambuscade. As a rule, however, the traveller, though he profits from the excellence of the French roads as a means of transport, is apt to wish with the Scotchman, that he could have "seen them before they were made," that is, unless he have a very special turn for geometrically straight lines: their length, their straightness, their uniformity, are terribly destructive to the beauty of a landscape. But in the case of the Mustapha Supérieur road, he has nothing but admiration to bestow, and as it climbs the hill in grand and graceful curves, that afford at every moment a fresh and yet more delightful prospect over sea and land, he is quite willing to complete the north-country couplet, and bless, in this case, not General Wade, but General Voirol and, for once, the *génie militaire.*

The walks which may be taken from Mustapha Supérieur in almost any direction, are numberless and most attractive.

Turn which way he will, the explorer can scarcely fail to discover some new charm of landscape, some picturesque nook, suddenly revealed to him. He may wander up and down the wooded slopes of the Sahel day after day, always taking a fresh route, and scarcely or never going wrong, if his tastes lead him to rejoice in flowery lanes, if he have an eye for colour, or an ear tuned to the singing of wild birds.

"The environs of Algiers are indeed beautiful. None can paint like nature, nor can a description do justice to her colouring. Characteristic of these rural scenes, are the delightful roads which turn and wind about them, making walks and drives enchanting. There are many of the kind in Europe, in England especially, but the trim hedges of our pretty country lanes convey no idea of the same hawthorn, honeysuckle, wild roses, shrubs, and creepers left to nature, and growing to a size peculiar to the vegetation of Africa. Here the hedges, flourishing under the voluptuous sun of the south, rise high overhead; out of them grow aromatic lentisks and large trees; ivy, honeysuckle, blue-bells, capucines, and similar flowery climbers, entwining themselves amongst their boughs, fall in wreaths over the way, or reaching from twig to twig, hang in festoons along it; thus mingling with the leaves of the trees, they seem to produce blue, red, or yellow flowers, the colours of the aspiring parasites. Nothing is more beautiful than the effect produced by the caprices of these erratic flatterers, which rejoice the eye and waft perfume across our path. So thick and high are these hedges, that parts of the road before us are often covered like a leafy bower, which changes to open side-rows as we advance. The pleasure of a walk is increased by birds singing and warbling in the foliage above us; and not out of harmony are the Kabyles or Arabs we occasionally meet, perched high on camels or riding lady-fashion on mules and asses."—*Algeria as It Is.*

Zammit's Hotel, about half-way between Algiers and the Colonne Voirol, is an excellent starting-point for some of these walks; thence a charming road winds down from the upper to the lower Mustapha road, joining the latter at Fontaine-Bleue, while in the opposite direction is one of the

most delightful of the shorter excursions in the neighbourhood of Algiers, not too far for moderate walkers, and shady, the "Chemin des Aqueducs," which leads by a circuitous but most picturesque route back to the town. It is also a good carriage-road, and may be included in a drive to Birmandreis.

The road that turns to the right from the main route, between the grounds of the Villa Orientale (Zammit's Hotel) and the Agricultural School, should be taken. Following this, an interesting Arab pottery—Arab to all intents and purposes, though the work is now carried on by French workpeople—will be passed. The shapes of the vases and lamps, of coarsest clay, moulded with the hand, are charming, and some of them quite classical. The road then follows the windings of a romantic glen or fissure in the hill-side, delightfully wooded, and shut in by the higher slopes of the Sahel. The steep and almost inaccessible sides of the ravine, are clothed with the most luxuriant vegetation; an ancient aqueduct which gives its name to the spot, spans the glen; and white villas peep here and there among the trees with which the hill-sides above are clothed, trees among which the silver-leaved aspen is conspicuous, as a relief to richer shades of deep green. The glen is vocal with a perfect chorus of nightingales and thrushes, which vaunt, not without reason, the charms of their leafy abode. The road after emerging from the ravine, passes through a cluster of pretty French villas with gay *persiennes* and bright little gardens on the hill-side, known as the Cité d'Isly, and regains Algiers either by the upper road, which leads to the Porte de Sahel at the top of the town, or by the lower, which rejoins the road to Mustapha Supérieur

just outside the Porte d'Isly. Higher up the Mustapha Supérieur road, close to a little café where the omnibus from Algiers stops, is a pleasant lane, which leads on the right to the residence of the English consul, and other houses chiefly inhabited by English people. On the opposite side of the road, just beyond the orphanage of St. Vincent de Paul, a steep pathway known as the Roman road, but which is more probably Turkish, descends the hill to the Champ de Manœuvres and the lower Mustapha road.

The new cemetery of the Commune of Mustapha, lies on the slope of the hill between the upper and lower roads, and can be approached from either—from the lower by Fontaine-Bleue, or from the upper by the Colonne Voirol. It is better, perhaps, to approach it by the upper road and return by the lower. The view from the cemetery is delightful. A portion of it has been appropriated to the use of the English community, and was consecrated in 1871 by the Bishop of Gibraltar. It is already a spot consecrated also by the tears and loving memories of many of our countrymen and countrywomen.

From the Colonne Voirol several ways diverge. The middle road is that leading to the valley of the Hydra, one of the most picturesque spots on this side of Algiers. The road quickly becomes a mere Arab lane, very rough for carriages, and forming a long natural arcade by the overhanging branches of the trees; but the views to be had through the gaps in the leafy veil are charming. On the immediate left will be seen the Château d'Hydra, a fine old Arab palace, one of the show-houses of Algiers, now occupied by Eyre Ledgard, Esq., and furnished and

arranged with the greatest possible taste, and an evident and rare discernment of the fitness of things. To the right a fine ivy-covered aqueduct, with a double row of arches, spans the glen. The retrospect is grand in the extreme, and changes with every turn of the road. On one side the vast plain of the Metidja lies exposed almost in its full length, flat to the very mountain's feet as the palm of a man's hand; on the other are the wooded valleys and verdant slopes of the Sahel. Backward lies the sea, still and blue under its sunny canopy of sky; Cape Matifou standing well and clearly out to view, the curve of the bay dotted with glittering white houses; and, breaking the sky-line, in the far distance, the snow-capped peaks of the Djurdjura mountain range.

Where two ways meet, that to the right should be chosen, which, leading into the El-Biar road, will conduct the traveller to the Bivouac des Indigènes, and so by the Fort de l'Empereur homewards. This round makes a drive of about two hours and a half.

CHAPTER XVIII.

BIRMANDREIS.—THE VALLEY OF THE FEMME SAUVAGE.—FROM BIRMANDREIS TO FONTAINE-BLEUE BY THE ARAB PATH.—BIRKHADEM AND TIXERAÏN.—KOUBBA.—THE OSTRICH FARM.

"Fast by a brook or fountain's murmuring wave."
Beattie.

To Birmandreis by the upper Mustapha road, returning by the valley of the Femme Sauvage and lower Mustapha road. A drive of about two hours.

FROM the Colonne Voirol (see page 300) the road to Birmandreis turns to the left, bordered on one side by picturesque rocks overgrown with shrubs and creepers, and having on the other, a valley well cultivated with vines and fruit-trees, among which the Japanese medlar is the most common. A fantastical-looking house known as the Villa Langenstein will be noticed on the right. It was for some years inhabited by an Englishman named Hawke, who amused himself by executing various sculptures in the soft rock against which his house was built. Some of them are clever as well as curious, but the action of the weather will not permit them to be a very lasting monument of his artistic tastes. The road descends gradually into the valley until the village of Birmandreis is reached, the proper name of which is Bir Mourad Reis, the well of Mourad the captain, from

the name of a notorious Flemish renegade corsair of the seventeenth century, famous in Algerian legends, who is said to have lived, when on shore, in this spot, and when afloat, to have been the terror of the northern as well as of the southern seas, carrying his piratical excursions as far even as the coast of Ireland! Birmandreis is a pretty little village with houses built round a green, on which stands the church in a grove of plane-trees. It has, altogether, something of the air of an English village. On the green is a fountain well supplied with water. To the left opens out the wild gorge of the Femme Sauvage—a reft in the mountain, worn by the stream which flows through it to the sea. It takes its somewhat odd name from a certain beautiful "wild woman," who, in the first days of the French occupation, took up her abode in a flower-embosomed cottage in the secluded dell. Various rumours are extant as to this mysterious personage. Some assert that a romantic and disappointed passion led her thus to seek solitude and peace in the untrodden paths of the African glen. From other accounts it would seem that, whatever her sorrows or wrongs, the lady was not such a hater of her kind as her sobriquet implies; that, on the other hand, her presence in the glen was so dangerous to the peace of mind and morals of the neighbouring camp, that one of the governors-general of Algiers bribed her with a considerable sum of money to return to her native Paris. It is even asserted that she more than once accepted the bribe, but re-appeared on the scene just when it was believed that she was safely landed in the old country. However this may be, she has now long since departed. But the name which records her eccentricities or fascinations still clings to the

spot. The ravine, which winds for a mile and a half through the rocky hills, is charmingly wooded and very picturesque. The following is a description given of the rich vegetation of this valley by a French writer, M. Desprez, and it is scarcely overcoloured :—

"At the bottom of the ravine, in serried phalanx, wave bananas, whose long leaves of vivid green contrast well with the dark hues of the orange-trees which bend over the stream. On the rocky slopes mingle in luxuriant confusion, the shades of the pomegranate, borne down by its weight of mahogany-coloured fruit, the *jujubier*, with its mass of shining green berries, and the lemon-tree, half hidden under golden fruit. In the midst, tower up grand cypresses, with lustrous grey stems, clustered about the parent trunk like the pipes of an organ, while rising to the sky, a wood of dark green pines crowns the whole."

M. Desprez has said nothing either of the masses of wild fennel and asparagus which clothe the steeper rocks, nor of the many-coloured carpet of wild flowers which covers the ground, nor of the almond and other fruit trees, which in spring make this dell a mass of delicate blossom. From the number of fruit-trees, now run wild, which are to be seen on the precipitous sides of the valley, it seems probable that, at some time or other, it formed part of a cultivated garden—doubtless one of those "twenty thousand" of which the old writers speak as existing in the neighbourhood of Algiers. These ruinous gardens, with perhaps a fragment of an old house in their midst, are by no means uncommon in this country. Change of fortune has possibly something to do with it, but Mahomedans are excessively superstitious as to evil spirits, and the suspicion of a place being haunted, has in numberless cases led to the abandonment of these deserted mansions.

In the valley of the Femme Sauvage are still to be seen

a few habitations peeping here and there, like nests from the trees; but for the most part, the glen is left to blossom and flourish in its own sweet wildness. Even the water-mills, which formerly turned in the stream, are now disused, their great wheels mossed and fern-grown; and the silk-worm farm, which was at one time established in the glen, proved, from some cause or other, a failure. A quarry of freestone is being worked at the entrance of the valley just above the Ruisseau, a little village in the lower Mustapha road, which is active with tan and brick-yards. The tramway cars from the Place du Gouvernement run as far as the Ruisseau, and afford an excellent opportunity for those who wish to explore the valley of the Femme Sauvage on foot.

The following will be found a delightful walk of about three miles:—Through the valley from the Ruisseau to Birmandreis, and back by a picturesque "chemin arabe," which, passing up a series of rough steps or blocks of stone which give it almost the appearance of a water-course, starts beside the little café on the green of Birmandreis, and leads over the crest of the hill and down again by a most charmingly unconventional path, which the "génie militaire" has fortunately overlooked, to Fontaine-Bleue and the Champ de Manœuvres, where the tramway is again available. This is one of the most characteristic walks in the neighbourhood of Algiers, and should be taken if possible in the afternoon, as the sunset lights greatly add to its attractions.

It is a serious drawback to Algiers that sunsets are not visible from it. To compensate for the loss, it can, indeed, boast the most brilliant sun-risings, but these after all scarcely fill the place of that which is not; and the loss

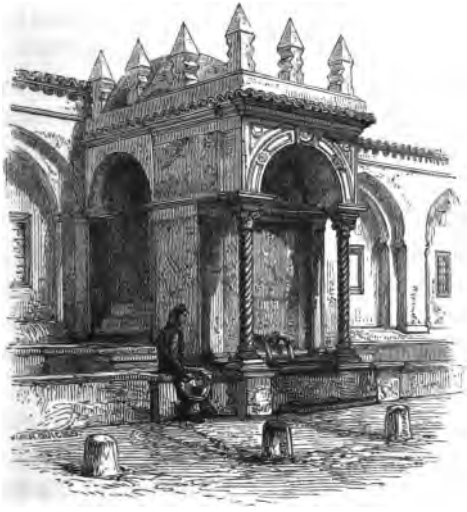
makes itself felt and regretted daily, when the rich evening glow spreads over and glorifies the landscape, suggesting to every mind how much more beautiful the reality, of which this is only the reflection! *Faute de mieux*, however, that glory, the "evidence of things not seen," must be accepted gratefully, and may as a rule, be enjoyed with impunity even by persons in delicate health, since scarcely any chill need be feared in the balmy African climate, such as makes the sunset hours so fatal on the northern shores of the Mediterranean.

Birmandreis is a centre from which various roads diverge. On the one side that of the valley of the Femme Sauvage; and on the same side an upper road leading to Koubba; the Arab bridle-road, named before, to Fontaine-Bleue; the road northwards to the Colonne Voirol, by which we have already come (page 306); and that opposite to and a continuation of it, to Birkhadem and Tixeraïn, which we now propose taking. The country through which it passes is flat and well cultivated, possessing very large plantations of fruit-trees, chiefly mulberry, and vegetables, which supply the market of Algiers.

Birkhadem (five miles from Algiers, omnibus twice a day, frequented by Arabs) is a neat village of some two thousand inhabitants, with a church and school, situated in the midst of orchards and gardens. The fort above the village is the site of a camp, which served as a station for political offenders in 1851; it is now used as a military prison, the prisoners, to the number of four or five hundred, being let out as labourers to the colonists of the neighbourhood. The chief attraction of Birkhadem, that from which it takes its name (the well of the negress), is a remarkably beautiful Moorish fountain which adorns the village *Place*.

It is in the form of a marabout, adorned with marble columns and large marble basins, and is a favourite subject with artists.

About a mile westward of Birkhadem, along a somewhat rough country lane, or *chemin vicinal*, will be found an Arab village little frequented by Europeans, but well worth explor-



Fountain of Birkhadem.

ing—Tixeraïn. The road to it presents, perhaps, more thoroughly African features than any other in the immediate neighbourhood of the French capital. Here, at length, one seems to have left France and Europe behind one—to have escaped from the civilized world! Here and there, crowning a hill, is to be seen an old white-walled and fortified Moorish house; here and there, just off the high-road, if high-road it

can be called, sheltered from prying eyes by wild screens of waving pampas grass and stern cacti, lie little Arab hamlets or farmsteads chiefly composed of huts of bamboo and thatch, on the roofs of which the cactus has taken root, and is spreading out its prickly green arms.

A word must be said about the cactus, which at Tixeraïn and its neighbourhood seems to attain its greatest perfection. At first acquaintance, these prickly hedges are felt to be indisputably ugly, to have something excessively cruel and savage about them; even the aloe has a cruel look, turning towards the spectator, as Fromentin says, "its armed embrasure of broken spears," but after awhile the African hedgerows grow upon one, and when seen in their natural beauty—not clipped and pared down to mark divisions between potato fields or cottage gardens, but in their native luxuriance, an impenetrable shield and screen which nature plants around the humble dwellings of her simple children—they have a wild, grand, *noli-me-tangere* air about them which is very impressive. Nor are they alone towers of defence, stern and impregnable—they furnish food as well as protection—having, like most of us, a kindly side to their nature if the obtruding prickles can only be avoided! To the simple fare of the frugal Arab, this fruit makes a most valuable addition, and it will not be found unpalatable to an European wayfarer under a hot African sun; but let him beware lest he pluck too rashly at the tempting crimson cones, that spring so quaintly from the edges of the prickly limbs, for the wise man who first assured the world that roses were not to be had without thorns, could only have done so, because prickly pears in his neighbourhood were not, and cacti did not flourish.

In beauty, if not in usefulness, perhaps, the aloe-hedges carry off the palm.

"Look at that aloe hedgerow a little distance from us, that stretches across the country like a long blue rippling wave on a calm sea, and which, as we approach it, seems thrown up fantastically and irregularly by breakers to a height of six or eight feet, and which, like the sea, on a nearer view, changes its opaque, cold blue tint to a rich transparent green and gold. Approach them closely, walk under their colossal leaves, avoid their sharp spear-points, and touch their soft, pulpy stems. What wonderful variety there is in their forms, what transparent beauty of colour, what eccentric shadows they cast upon each other, and with what a grand spiral sweep some of the young shoots rear upwards! So tender and pliable are they, that in some positions a child might snap their leaves, and yet so wonderful is the distribution of strength, that they would resist at spear-point the approach of a lion, and almost turn a charge of cavalry. If we snap off the point of one of the leaves, it is a needle, and a thread clings to it, which we may peel off down the stem a yard long—needle and thread nature-pointed, nature-threaded."—*Artists and Arabs. H. Blackburn.*

It is this combination of strength and gentleness, of offensive power, proclaiming defence not defiance — of savage nature tamed—which, perhaps, makes the special charm of the African hedgerows—giving the impression of the lion turned watch-dog, which is altogether different from the idea conveyed by the trim privet screens of our own land, which are so decidedly screens and nothing else.

The village of Tixeraïn is only approached by a narrow footpath, which will be found on the left of the road, and which descends rapidly into a wild gorse-covered valley, across which still stretch the grand arches of a Roman aqueduct. The fragment is in a perfect state of preservation, and points to the time when the neighbouring village was a place of some wealth and importance. Other

evidences are not wanting. Not far from the aqueduct the beaten pathway leads to a beautiful Moorish fountain. It is of white marble, adorned with coloured tiles—in design as elaborate, in execution as perfect, as that of Birkhadem; but in this solitary spot, amid its wild surroundings, the neglected half-ruined evidence of past grandeur, is as much more impressive and beautiful than its trim and well-kept sister on the village "Place," as was the old Roman Coliseum before the French "génie" swept and garnished its time-wrecked walls. Opposite the fountain is a tiny hut, and beside it a bamboo awning, which serve the purpose of an Arab café. Here, cross-legged, or perhaps stretched at full length on oval palmetto mats, recline little groups of solemn-faced Arabs, wrapped in their drab burnous. Two will be playing at draughts, with men that look like the pawns and castles of our chess-boards; others smoking, others drinking coffee, whilst one or more among them, a little apart from the rest, with his face turned Mecca-wards, may be seen reverently engaged in prayer, his beads slipping through his fingers as he recites verse after verse of "the book." Meantime the "patron" of the café busies himself over a small stove within the whitewashed hut, where hangs a board covered with mysterious characters, which represent the scores of the habitual customers. Beside the stove is a mortar, in which the coffee-berries are pounded to an impalpable powder; upon this is poured boiling water, and the coffee is made. It is supplied to customers with sugar, at the moderate sum of one sou a cup; each cup having a tiny coffee-pot to itself, from which it is poured into small vessels without handles or saucers, and for the most part

enclosed in copper egg-cups. Following the coffee comes the pipe, which is lighted by a small piece of live charcoal placed in the bowl, to supply which, an Arab boy, armed with a pair of diminutive tongs, wanders from guest to guest. The Arab café supplies the place at once of the inn and club. In it, tucked up on a matted shelf, the passing stranger finds repose, while the club element is well represented by the male inhabitants of all neighbouring farms and hamlets, who, many of them, pass the best portion of their time here—(leaving to the women the tasks of wood and water carrying, together with other drudgery); —leading a life of serene and contemplative idleness, in which coffee and pipes, to which may be occasionally added the forbidden delights of *kief*, or opium, form the chief events, and the café story-teller, with the familiar but ever-fresh store of the Thousand and One Nights, its only excitement.

A little to the right of the fountain and café rises a hill, the whole surface of which is, or appears to be, a tangled maze and waste of gigantic cacti—but within these natural fortifications is to be found a city—or the ruins of one. So overgrown and hidden away is it, that it might well be the bower of the sleeping beauty after the hundred years of enchantment. But it has slumbered many a long year more than that, and still slumbers on. "It is," says a French writer, "as though some accursed race had lived and died here, and over their graves had sprung up a forest of thorns." Yet here and there, are some faint signs of life. Every now and then, Arab huts, rudely formed from the débris of older and more elaborate dwellings, and ornamented with graceful arches, sculptured pillars and blocks

of marble, are to be found, while the bark of the domestic dog, and the bray of the domestic donkey, to which the thorny world must surely be a paradise, relieve somewhat happily the desolation of the place. On the top of the hill is a small whitewashed mosque, half buried in trees. Everything in this quaint old-world village is hidden away and mysterious, like its history. Even the few inhabitants, instead of showing any curiosity at the advent of European visitors, hasten to hide themselves in their dwellings at the approach of strangers, as rabbits run to their warren.

From Tixeraïn the road must be retraced back to Birkhadem, from whence, instead of returning by the high-road, another *chemin vicinal*, but a very good one, may be taken to the right, which cuts across the slope of the mountain in the direction of Koubba. On the right the orphanage of St. Charles Borromeo will be passed. This orphanage, named after the Milanese saint, who owes his canonization to his noble exertions among his plague-stricken townsmen, was founded with other institutions of the same kind, by Monseigneur Lavigerie, Archbishop of Algiers, at the time of the famine in 1867. This is the home of the female orphans, that for boys being at Maison Carrée, both of which establishments are doing, and likely to do, a good work in the colony. The children were literally picked up out of the streets, most of them in a starving condition. They are brought up as agriculturists, even the girls cultivating the farm which is attached to their asylum. Groups of them, in their picturesque white dresses, may be seen at work in the orchards and fields about Koubba and Birkhadem, under the superintendence of a sisterhood, who share their labours. The notion of this field labour for

females may not be altogether consonant with our notions, but out-door work is, in Algiers, accompanied with far less hardships than in our damp climate, and it is probably felt to be a good education for the future wives of colonists. This is the destiny for which the girls are being prepared, and as soon as they arrive at woman's estate, they are married in a somewhat summary fashion to the eligible inmates of the male orphanage. Probably the pairing is not more arbitrary than the generality of French marriages, and the households of these young people, Christianized, civilized, and in a measure educated, are likely to prove more harmonious and well regulated than that of the ordinary Arab. The plan seems at least to be succeeding, and already one large and flourishing village has been peopled by Christian natives from these schools of waifs and strays. There are at present about two hundred girls in the orphanage.

Koubba is a village of some thirteen hundred inhabitants, situated in a very fine position on the summit of the Sahel, commanding a most magnificent view on every side. It is a complete panorama. Not only is the coast from Pointe Pescade to Cape Matifou spread out to view, with the glistening white city on the one side, and the village-dotted shore, with the snowy Djurdjura Mountains, as the limit on the other, but landwards also, the prospect is equally extensive and striking. It is truly—

> "A mountain, at whose verdant feet
> A spacious plain, outstretch'd in circuit wide,
> Lies pleasant."

From no point is the vast plain of the Metidja, with its

peculiar conformation, better displayed. From the heights of Koubba it can be seen stretching away in apparently interminable length westward, while it lies in its whole breadth before the spectator, like a magnified cricket-ground, from Sahel to Atlas, without so much as a mole-hill to break its uniformity. Across it, at the foot of the Atlas, nestling among orange-groves, glisten the white houses of the rosebud Blidah. At Koubba was one of the earliest camps established by the French, as it formed part of the first line of defence traced by the Duc de Rovigo, in 1831, and whichi ncluded Bou-Zarea, Dely-Ibrahim, Koubba, and Tixeraïn. It was at Koubba that the disciplinary regiments, which afterwards became so well known in Algerian struggles as the Zephyrs, were first formed. The village, which was also one of the earliest and most successful of the colony, was originally peopled by Swiss and German immigrants. It is principally devoted to the cultivation of the vine. But the most important feature of Koubba is the large ecclesiastical college, which, from its commanding position, will assuredly have attracted the stranger's gaze from the moment of his first arriving in Algiers, and every evening at sun-down afterwards—when, the coast and the lesser heights left in shadow, the rosy-golden light lingers lovingly upon the white dome and long façade, that crown the eastern spur of the Sahel. The college is divided into two sections —one for boys, and the other for elder students, each about thirty in number. It consists of two long corridors leading out of a fine central court, in which is the church, and where on Sundays there is an excellent musical service, to which strangers are admitted without difficulty. The Archbishop of Algiers has apartments in the Séminaire.

The grounds of the college are very extensive, and though a considerable portion of them is utilized for the production of the vine, they are laid out with much taste and order. A little building in the garden, now used as a chapel, is that which gives the neighbouring village its name. It is a koubba, or small mosque, built by Hadji Pasha some time in the sixteenth century. In the garden also on the seaward side, that is, overlooking the winding road which leads down to the Ruisseau, is a very handsome Calvary, with chapels, grottoes, and stations, ornamented with sculptured work. The return to Algiers may be made either by this zigzag road, cut in the slope of the hill facing the bay, which leads to the lower Mustapha road; or by that which passes westward through the original village—now known as Vieux Koubba, lying in the midst of vines and corn-fields, thence by another *chemin vicinal*—a somewhat rough country lane, to Birmandreis. Either route is excessively picturesque; the latter, from Koubba to Birmandreis, passing through a very fine plantation of olives and pines, whose branches shadow a luxuriant undergrowth, the wood being known by the name of the Bois-Sacré.

The drive to Tixeraïn and Koubba together, leaving time for explorations at Tixeraïn, will be rather a long one —to Koubba alone, by the lower Mustapha road, and home by the Bois-Sacré and Birmandreis, would be about three hours.

Before altogether leaving Koubba, mention should be made of an enterprise which is being carried on at this place by an English lady, married to a Frenchman, and which is curious and well worth visiting—an ostrich farm. The notion sounds an odd one, and still more amusing is a

visit to the nursery of these long-legged denizens of the desert. The eggs, together with those of other rare southern birds, are hatched by steam, the period of incubation being for the ostrich eight weeks.

Some of the younger members of this unique household are very tame, come to the keeper's call, and are disposed to take friendly familiarities with the head-dresses of European visitors; but the elderly members of the society are apt to be touchy, and may be approached only with caution. It is with the foot that the ostrich strikes when angry.

The sale of the ostrich feathers, which are all forwarded to Paris, is likely to make this undertaking a remunerative one.

CHAPTER XIX.

FORT DE L'EMPEREUR.—BOU-ZAREA.—FRAIS-VALLON.—BIRTRARIA.

> "No dainty floure or herbe that grows on grownd,
> No arborett with painted blossoms drest,
> And smelling sweete, but there it might be found
> To bud out faire, and throwe her sweete smels al arownd."
>
> *Spenser's Faerie Queene.*

Drive from Algiers to Bou-Zarea by El-Biar, taking about two hours and a half.

Omnibus (frequented by Arabs) twice a day.

THE road to El-Biar, which is also one of the routes from Algiers to Blidah, begins at the Porte de Sahel at the junction of the Rampes Valée and Rovigo. It passes on the left that fortress of many memories which still bears the name of the Spanish emperor—would-be conqueror of Algiers three hundred years ago.

There was probably even at that time some sort of redoubt on the spot, as the Spaniards are said to have captured three guns on the height above the city, where the invading army took up its station; it would be beyond the truth to say encamped, for we are assured by a contemporary historian, Durand de Villegaignon, that the Spaniards, deceived possibly by the mere name of Africa, were absolutely without tents, or even cloaks to shelter them from the weather.

This writer, who gives a detailed account of the expedition, mentions the position taken up by the Spaniards as "a thousand paces from the city."

We read in his account—

"It is certain that, could we have held this position, we could easily have surrounded our enemies and cut them off from all succour. The city before us was like a little triangle, one side of which lay along the sea-coast, so that, encompassed by our troops, it would have had small hope of aid from without. And though we might have been assailed from the plain, we had the advantage of position, and could have repulsed an attack all the more readily, as, between the plain and the hills on which we were encamped, were many ravines and tortuous places easy to defend; thus everything was well arranged by the Emperor so far as human foresight could tell, and the whole army gave itself up to rejoicing at so happy a termination of their long voyage."

The end was nearer than they thought, and—

"The best laid schemes o' mice an' men gang aft agley."

After the drenching (page 289) came the attack, and the historian is forced to confess that the tortuous paths and elevations, which the invaders had thought would stand them in good stead, proved all to the advantage of their enemies, for "no sooner were we entered into a defile than the Arabs would suddenly surround us, and assail us with javelins and weapons, and then in one moment, as their custom is, disappear." The same method of warfare prevailed among the Arabs of the fifteenth as of the nineteenth century, and the historian of Charles V. makes exactly the same complaint of them as did the French during the wars with Abd-el-Kader.

The difficulty was always, not to kill them, but to catch them. The Spanish historian naïvely enough relates—

"When we could come up with them it was easy to despatch them, for

they fought naked—that is, without armour. But the fashion of their fighting was unknown to the Europeans. Never did they come against us but in small numbers, galloping and shooting arrows and javelins at us, then putting themselves to flight so diligently, that though we followed with all our power, and so broke our ranks, we could not succeed in reaching them."—*Villegaignon.*

The disasters which befell the Spanish army on this occasion have been already related, and also the legend of the Moslem prophet who foretold their defeat, not by man, but by Heaven. Another legend handed down by the Mozabites, is extant as to the abandonment of this position by the Spaniards. It is probably nothing but a tale, but is largely believed by the Mozabite population. It seems that at the time of the siege, these foreigners, who were even then a numerous class in the population of Algiers, demanded audience of the pasha. Introduced into his presence, they promised to deliver the city and raise the siege, if the governor would, from this time henceforth, secure to them the monopoly of the baths, and of the sale of charcoal. This was granted, and the offer accepted, the pasha probably thinking that though the prophet had spoken, it was well to make the best of both worlds, and secure deliverance from the Mozabites in case that of Heaven should fail.

Later on in the day, a crowd of weeping women, their forms shrouded in the haik, their faces concealed by the jealous adjar, seek the Spanish camp on the hill above the city, from which the infidel guns are already beginning to work havoc among the dwellings of the upper town. They come, say they, on the part of their husbands and fathers, to implore the mercy of the mighty conquerors, into whose hands they must assuredly fall. The Spaniards,

unsuspicious of ruse, admit the suppliants within their trenches. A consultation as to the terms of surrender is to be held; but suddenly, at a given signal, the Mozabites throw off the feminine disguise which has concealed their swarthy features and stalwart forms, and making a sudden rush at the guns, massacre the gunners and turn their own weapons upon the invaders. From this moment the Spanish retreat began.

Such is the tale of the Fort de l'Empereur as told by the Mozabites with some pride, though, in truth, the story redounds more to the credit of Spanish gallantry than of negro heroism. The storm completed the defeat of the Spaniards, but the Mozabites claimed and obtained the reward for which they had bargained—the monopoly of various occupations in the city—a monopoly, which though not now secured them, they still seem to possess.

After the defeat of the Spaniards, a strong tower was erected in 1545 on the hill above the city, to which an entrenched wall was added by Hussein Pasha in 1580.

It needed, says a French writer, a separate European invasion, for the Algerines to find out on which points to protect themselves, the Fort de l'Empereur and the Fort de l'Eau being the result of two Spanish invasions, and the Fort des Anglais having been built after an English descent on that spot.

In 1725 the traveller Peyssonnel describes the Fort de l'Empereur, as "a great tower of hewn stone surrounded by a wall, with some irregular fortifications at the corners built of bricks."

The description would have applied equally well to it in 1830, when it became the chief point of the French attack

upon Algiers. It was then armed with one hundred and twenty guns.

The fall of the citadel decided the fate of the city, and it was in the ruins of this fortress, that General de Bourmont received the submission of the Dey.

The Turks, on retreating, blew up the central tower in which was a powder magazine, but it has since been restored, and is now used as a military prison, and officers who have rendered themselves liable to punishment are confined here.

El-Biar (the wells), so called from a kind of reservoir, which is supplied by the aqueducts, and in its turn supplies the fountains of the town beneath it, is a collection of French villas, among which are still to be seen a few old Moorish palaces, charmingly situated on the slopes of the Sahel, commanding extensive and beautiful views and surrounded by delightful gardens. A few ruined windmills may be seen here and there, condemned by the introduction of steam. Here are two or three French charitable institutions, a Magdalen Asylum maintained by the Sisters du Bon Pasteur, and a convent of Petites Sœurs des Pauvres, an admirable institution supported entirely by voluntary contributions in money and food, which are collected daily by the sisters, for the support of old and worn-out men.

At a point where the roads to Chéragas and Douera unite is a little café, the Bivouac des Indigènes. Here, in front of a half-ruined koubba, is the spot, where during the time of the conquest, a whole battalion of the 20th of the line were massacred by the natives, through the carelessness of their officer, who permitted the men to be surprised while all busily employed at the fountain cleaning their arms.

From this point the road mounts northwards, by a gradual but continuous ascent to the higher slopes of Mount Bou-Zarea, through

> "fields white
> With alasum or blue with bugloss—banks
> Of glossy fennel blent with tulips wild,
> And sunflowers like a garment prankt with gold;
> Acres and miles of opal asphodel."

All manner of pleasant surprises await the traveller along these flowery ways—a yellow field which he takes to be overgrown with cowslips, turns out to be a huge bed of sweet-breathed narcissus; a bank where he might only look for daisies is adorned with the glossy, indented leaves of the acanthus, and glorious with marigolds and scarlet anemones. The hedgerows, too, so diversified, and so barbarous, are an infinite delight.

Here will be seen groups of grand aloes, their spiked leaves eight or ten feet high, their flower-stems twenty. Even withered and in decay, as it is alone given the winter traveller to Algiers to see these flowers, they are beautiful, —how beautiful in their summer prime, throwing up their grand masses of stately blossom to the sky, when all the tiny flowers at their feet have shrunk and withered under the sun's fierce ray, those only who brave the heat of an Algerian summer know.

It is impossible to think, from the vast number of flowering aloes in the neighbourhood of Algiers, that the plant only blooms, as it is said to do in colder climates, at intervals of fifty years; but here, as elsewhere, it flowers only to die. Happily, however, it does not leave itself without successors; phœnix-like it rises from its ashes, multiplied,

and sinks calmly to the earth in the encircling arms of its children.

The French village of Bou-Zarea has little to recommend it beyond its charming situation. Half a mile beyond, are two or three small koubbas surrounded by graves, and shaded by a most remarkable group of dwarf palms, which here, as a French writer observes, more truly merit the name of giants.

The koubbas contain nothing but the usual calico-draped tombs of the minor Mahomedan saints, but the view over mountain and valley to be obtained from the little hillock on which the white-domed buildings stand, is very fine, and the whole scene such as an artist might well love to paint.

"It would be passing over the most enjoyable part of our life abroad, if we omitted all mention of those delightful days spent on the hill-sides, on the heights of Bouzarea, and indeed everywhere in the neighbourhood of Algiers, sketching in winter-time in the open air! Odours of orange-groves, the aromatic scent of cedars, the sweet breath of wild flowers, roses, honeysuckle, and violets, should pervade this page;—something should be done which no words can accomplish to give the true impression of the scene—to picture the luxuriant wild growth of the surrounding vegetation, radiant in a sunshine which to a Northerner is unknown, and impossible to realise by any method of description—the calm enjoyment of living this pure life in a climate neither too hot nor too cold, neither too enervating nor too relaxing; of watching the serene days decline into sunsets that light up the Kabyle hills with crests of gold, and end in sudden twilights that spread a weird unearthly light across the silver sea."—*Arabs and Artists. H. Blackburn.*

These little groups of tombs on the mountain-side, half grown over with wild flowers, yet bearing in their glistening whiteness such evident marks of careful tending, have a wonderful charm of their own, giving a human interest to the most wild and savage landscape; and of these all the

surroundings are beautiful. On every side, wide stretches of hill and wooded dale; close around them a very "wilderness of sweets"; the ground gay with anemones and cyclamen; the stern cactus-hedge hidden away under a soft veil of shining large-leaved ivy, and wreathed about fantastically with creeping garlands of feathery clematis and wild roses, as though this were a little sanctuary of love and sorrow, into which no harsher thoughts might come; even the very palms that shade the tombs—trees that for the most part might stand as types of dignity unassailable and indifference supreme—even they, here rise with gnarled and twisted trunks, as though they themselves had known something of human suffering and sorrow, and bend their bright crowns with pitying tenderness over the quiet graves, where lie the loved and lost.

It seems as though a special sanctity of sorrow hung about the flower-wreathed spot. Possibly the conceit is an erroneous one. Possibly in these quaint Moslem tombs lie none who were in their lives specially beloved, nor at their death lamented—none perhaps who deserved so to be, though if the same rules hold good under African as under Northern skies, the one fact by no means includes the other. Be that as it may, the spot is so sweet a one that, as Shelley said of the cemetery at Rome, "It might almost make one in love with death."

Half a mile further, on the crest of the mountain, is the quaint Kabyle village of Bou-Zarea, inhabited by the small remnant of a once powerful tribe, whose possessions stretched away from here almost to the walls of Algiers. The village, which must be approached on foot, and which is surrounded on all sides by cactus-hedges, consists of a collection of

earthen hovels roofed with a rough thatch of tree-branches, and whitewashed to dazzling whiteness both inside and out. The door, the only aperture by which light and air are admitted to these dwellings, is very low, and the only furniture of the rooms, if rooms they can be called in which a man can barely stand upright, consists in two or three palmetto mats and a few earthenware jars.

On the highest point of the mountain is a small mosque with its invariable "Marabout's" tomb, draped in cotton handkerchiefs. From thence a most extensive view is obtained on all sides, embracing the beautiful plain of the Metidja and the lower Atlas with the coast eastward as far as Dellys.

The inhabitants of the village display a very friendly feeling towards strangers, to whose visits they are well—almost too well—accustomed, since by their intercourse with Europeans, they have acquired the habits of inveterate beggars. The women are profuse in invitations to enter their huts, and their persistently outstretched hands enable the visitor to show his appreciation of their politeness. The importunity is somewhat annoying, but evident poverty pleads excuse for them, and a handful of coppers distributed among the whole village, brings down a perfect shower of benedictions on the generous donor. The women are all unveiled and very scantily clothed, but on their bare arms and ankles many of them wear curiously wrought bangles and bracelets of silver and other metals, together with various barbaric adornments of beads and berries about their necks and heads. Mrs. Broughton in her narration gives the following account of a visit to the mountain village of Bou-Zarea in 1811:—

"We went with a numerous party to picnic on the Bouzarea, and passed a delightful day. There is a Cabailli village up the mountain, from which there was a very beautiful view. The women and children of the above-named village were most squalid and uncivilised looking beings, the fair sex much uglier than the men, their skin ornamented with many blue devices, in the manner that sailors adorn their arms, by introducing gunpowder under the skin, which is perforated with a needle. This, with here and there a silver ornament in the form of an ear-ring or bracelet, completed their *parure*. The remainder of their scanty toilette was of very coarse material, of most primitive fashion, and was certainly not distinguished by—*la propreté*. I had an opportunity of making these remarks as we passed their wretched mud cabins, at the doors of which they stood staring at us with listless curiosity."

The mud-hovels and the squalor of those days remain, but the "listless curiosity" referred to by the Consul's fair daughter, has given place to a decidedly keen interest in the wandering Roumi, and an eager appreciation of the value of his visits.

From Bou-Zarea the road winds gradually down into the valley, between hedgerows festooned with honeysuckle and clematis, and bordered with laurustinus, evergreen oaks, and olives. At every moment, at every bend of the road, fresh views of the valley, the sail-studded bay, the nestling village of St. Eugène, and the hill crowned by the majestic-looking church of Notre-Dame d'Afrique, present themselves. This road is, as the French guide-books have it, "the favourite belvidere of tourists," but it is so beautiful that it deserves to be called by a more dignified name. In its descent it passes by the Poudrière, which is situated on an isolated mamelon above the city, a sentinel keeping guard before it, and lower down are two petroleum factories, conspicuous by the inscription across each building, "Il est défendu de fumer." On the right will be seen the great stone quarries,

from which most of the material used in building the town and harbour of Algiers was taken. The town is re-entered by the Porte Bab-el-Oued.

To the Frais-Vallon by Carriage.—This is a short drive with which may be combined a visit to Bou-Zarea, or to the church of Notre-Dame d'Afrique. The carriage-drive only penetrates as far as the entrance of the Frais-Vallon. The most beautiful part must be explored on foot, and will well repay the exertions of the pedestrian. Omnibus (frequented by Arabs) to the Frais-Vallon several times a day. The road is by the Bab-el-Oued Gate, and follows the route to Bou-Zarea as far as the Poudrière, where it turns sharply to the left, the Bou-Zarea route inclining to the right. Thus another valley running almost parallel with that of Bou-Zarea is reached. It is a ravine rather than a valley; a cleft in the rocks, the precipitous sides of which are thickly clothed with a variety of forest-trees, with a beautiful under-growth of shrubs, ferns and flowers. The road, which is cut in the rock-side, after the fashion of a miniature mountain pass, and is scarcely wide enough to allow of two vehicles, is often a mere bower of overhanging laurustinus, laburnum and almond trees, while deep down in the glen, so far away and so bowered-over as to be completely out of sight, is a rushing streamlet, which, as it dances from boulder to boulder in graceful cascades, sends up the refreshing, and in Algiers, rare sound of falling water. Further up the valley where the carriage-road ends, is a mill with a huge wheel that the stream turns, and a Café Maure, before which a group of picturesque Arabs will be probably assembled, in grave discourse or graver silence:

Here, when a cup of excellent Arab coffee has been discussed, the traveller should pursue his excursion on foot to the head of the glen. On foot another route can be taken home. By carriage the return must be made the same way, but the road is so picturesque, that few will object to traverse it a second time. Behind the mill, a narrow path mounts the steep side of the ravine. After an ascent of a few minutes, the entrance of a little Arab house, enclosed in a garden of orange, fig and almond trees, is reached. Here is the abode of an Arab physician much considered by his own people, to whose reputation, and to that of the mineral spring which bubbles up close by his abode, is to be attributed the constant passage to and fro, of the natives on this route. Formerly the Arabs rejected the notion of curing disease by means of drugs. Dr. Shaw says—

"There are no doctors in the kingdom of Algiers. Fortunately the country is very healthy, and people live there to a good old age."—*Shaw's Travels.*

Indeed the fatalistic principles of the Mahomedans prevented them on religious grounds from using any means for the prevention or cure of disease. "What was sent was the will of Allah," said they, "and it was not for mortals to dispute His ruling." Even in the case of such a scourge as the plague, no means were taken either to avert or mitigate it; considering which circumstance, we can scarcely be surprised to hear that in one year, its ravages carried off fifty thousand persons in the town of Algiers alone, we can only perhaps wonder that no more perished. In this case the only thing which seemed to occur to the Moslem mind was to ignore the evil. We learn from Mrs. Brough-

ton's narrative, that it was "death by the law to report that the plague was in the city," and this, after it had been raging for months, and it was not until the Dey himself, or some other exalted personage, had been carried off by it, that anything was done to mitigate the public calamity. A fine illustration of the truth that "none are so blind as those who refuse to see;" but, curiously enough, the same official blindness has at times been observed in countries not swayed, as a rule, by Mussulman principles. Even Moslem prejudices however, yield in a certain measure to time, and either by way of following an European fashion, or on account of real benefit received from his advice, the grotto of the Arab Æsculapius of the Frais-Vallon is as crowded, principally by patients of the fair sex, as is the consulting-room of a favourite London physician. Indeed, it is said, that Europeans as well as natives have derived benefit from his treatment, which is usually remarkably simple, and that he has a special talent in curing nervous affections.

The spring of the Frais-Vallon—or rather one of them, for there are several that at this spot trickle out of the long grass, born to bubble unseen and unrecognised—is enclosed beneath a little koubba, where reposes a venerated marabout, Sidi Medjber. A tradition recommends women divorced by their husbands, to make three pilgrimages to this spot, whereby a second happier union is assured them. The waters of the source of Sidi Medjber are chalybeate and alkaline, and Dr. Bertherand suggests, that the tonic qualities of the spring may have something to do with the happy effects of the pilgrimage—by imparting to the eyes of the mourning wives an additional radiance and beauty. This physician believes the medicinal qualities of the

spring to be valuable, and asserts, that its near neighbourhood "should contribute to the fame and prosperity" of Algiers as a health-resort.

BIRTRARIA AND THE FOUNTAIN OF THE DEY.—Birtraria, the third of the valleys which cut through the Sahel westward of Algiers in parallel lines, and that nearest to the town, is the one least frequented, and though its characteristics are scarcely so striking as those of its sister-valley, surnamed the Cool, and though, unlike the Bou-Zarea, it may be said to lead to nowhere, it does not deserve to be neglected, since it affords one of the most shady and delightful walks in the neighbourhood of Algiers.

To reach it, pass through the upper gate of the town, the Porte de Sahel, and beyond the fortifications take the first lane to the right. It leads almost immediately into the valley, or rather into a path which, shaded by olives and almonds, entirely skirts the valley, which is charmingly wooded, and in which every here and there, a French villa or old Moorish house may be seen peeping among the trees.

At the head of the valley a little pathway descending to the right, leads down amid silvery aspens and trailing vines to a quaint old well, closed by a door, and known as the "Fountain of the Dey," since in olden times it was kept secure by lock and key from vulgar use, and reserved entirely for the use of "his highness"—a mounted janissary coming here every day, we are told, at the hour of the great man's repast, to fill a goblet for his sovereign's use. Close to the fountain is a small cabaret, where refreshment of a moderate kind may be obtained. From this

point the pedestrian may either extend his walk to the Frais-Vallon by taking the road which continues to ascend, and which will shortly bring him to a point where both the leafy valleys are spread out before him, as he stands on the ridge between the two. From thence he may follow a somewhat steep path, half hidden by the branches of the olive and lentisk trees into the Frais-Vallon, and join the carriage road at the Café Maure. Or, if this excursion be too long, and it involves another hour's walk, he may turn to the right by a narrow field-path, which, if he be not tempted to turn aside from, by the flowery delights of iris and cyclamen, narcissus and gladiolus, which allure him on this side and on that—will very shortly land him in the Bou-Zarea road close to the quarries. Another pathway from Birtraria leads left to El-Biar.

CHAPTER XX.

ST. EUGÈNE.

> "The breaking waves dashed high
> On a stern and rock-bound coast."
>
> *Mrs. Hemans.*

The tramway cars starting from the Place du Gouvernement follow this road as far as the picturesque suburb of St. Eugène.

AFTER passing the fortifications by the Porte Bab-el-Oued, take the road to the right, the Route Malakoff, beside the sea-shore, and which is the high-road from Algiers to Koleah. In the fosse of the fortifications a path leads on the right to a little strip of shore much frequented by bathers. Where the road passes through the green slopes of the embankment, a marble tablet will be observed fastened against the wall. This is erected over the grave of a celebrated rabbi who is credited with a miraculous voyage to Algiers. The legend is as follows, as given in M. Dalles's charming little "Guide Pittoresque :"—

"In the fourteenth century, after the expulsion of the Moors from Spain, the Jews, who had up to that time lived in that country without molestation, were subjected to severe and incessant persecutions. The great Rabbi Ben Simah Durand, or Simon Durand, was cast into prison with the heads of the leading Jewish families in Spain, and was condemned to death. On the day before that appointed for the execution, while all around him were wailing and lamenting, the face of the great rabbi suddenly became illuminated; his eyes burned as

though with a Divine fire, while a halo of light shone about his head. He took a piece of charcoal in his hand, and drawing the figure of a ship on the wall of his prison, said, turning to his companions, 'Let all those present who believe in the omnipotence of God, and who desire to be instantly released from captivity, put their hands with me upon this ship.' All with the exception of another famous rabbi, Ben Kaoua, obeyed, when the drawing instantly became a real ship, which transported the Israelites to the coast of Algiers.

"Ben Kaoua in his turn, drew on the wall, with the same piece of charcoal, the figure of a lion, on the back of which he mounted, and which took him in the same manner to Mostaganem."—*Alger. E. Dalles.*

Rabbi Durand was the ancestor of that family whose claims led to the quarrel between the French consul and the Dey, and hence to the French conquest of the country. Facing this tomb, on the slope of the fortification, is a small Jewish synagogue which covers the remains of another celebrated rabbi, Isaac Birchichat, who also came from Spain, and who died in Algiers in 1408, before the arrival of the miraculous vessel. These tombs are probably the remains of an old Jewish cemetery which existed on this spot, adjoining the Mussulman cemetery of Bab-el-Oued. Indeed, from the discovery of Roman sarcophagi in the Jardin Marengo, and a "columbarium," containing fifteen urns and eighteen tear-vases or lachrymatories, beneath the foundations of the Lycée, it is evident that this plot of ground must have been used as a place of sepulture for many centuries. The columbarium is supposed to be about two thousand years old. The roadway continues to pass very close to the sea, from which it is protected by large blocks of stone—a protection which is not at all times sufficient. This part of the coast is very indented, and the continual roll and surge of the breakers over the brown rocks, are suggestive rather of a Cornwall or

Devonshire sea, than of the rippling Mediterranean. On the left, a large building standing in extensive grounds, will be noticed. It was formerly the Dey's garden-house, of which we hear a good deal in Mrs. Broughton's interesting book. The large and beautiful gardens were kept in order entirely by Christian slaves, and it was here that the Dey had his menagerie—the lions and tigers "being only fastened," says Mrs. Broughton, "by ropes to the wall." Within the same enclosure is the old Turkish *salpêtrière*, or powder magazine, which was constructed by the Swedish consul, M. Schultz, in the year 1812, under Hadji Ali, to the great delight of the Algerines, if we may judge by the inscription which was written over the entrance. It was, according to M. Dalles, as follows :—

"Rejoice, oh Algiers!! rejoice with great joy; a powder-mill is built for you (thanks be to God) ready in all cases of need.

"By unremitting labour has the building been finished. It is El Hadji-Ali, the Pasha, who has built it, to combat the enemies of the faith, to walk in the way of the Lord. Soldiers of Islam, charge your arms gladly against the infidels, execute upon them your vengeance. Alevi, the author of these verses, prays you so to do. This building was finished in the year of the Hegira 1230 (A.D. 1812), and paid out of the money of the State."

These two buildings, with the gardens surrounding the Dey's villa, are now incorporated into the military hospital (*Hôpital du Dey*).

"And there, where the captive beauties of the harem were wont to promenade, may be seen the dressing-gown and cotton nightcap of the invalid soldier; where gunpowder was formerly manufactured, nothing more injurious than mustard-poultices and *tisanes* are concocted."—*Piesse. Itinéraire de l'Algérie.*

The hospital is a thoroughly well-arranged and really magnificent establishment, capable of accommodating about

seven hundred patients, and fitted up with all the contrivances of modern comfort—baths, reading-rooms, covered smoking galleries, &c.—while the beautiful and carefully-tended grounds make a delightful lounging-place for the convalescent, protected from the north-west winds by the opposite hills, open to the invigorating sea breezes, and affording charming views of the rock-bound bay and verdure-covered slopes of Bou-Zarea. The former villa of the Dey, which is now used as a hospital for officers, contains some beautiful pillars; and in one of the courtyards was an extremely handsome fountain in variously coloured marbles, which is now in the bureau of the *Direction.* In front of the Salpêtrière is the spot, where the telegraphic submarine cable from Marseilles is attached to the shore. Perched on the rock above, is the small koubba of Sidi Jaccoub, a famous fanatic of Algiers, whose notoriously immoral life, does not seem to have been considered any bar to his claims to sanctity. On the slopes of the hill above the Jardin du Dey, is a collection of somewhat poor houses known as the Cité Bugeaud.

On the sea-shore in front of the koubba, at a point called by the French Père-la-Chaise, from a collection of small shops where monuments and tombstones are exposed for sale, are the celebrated "Fountains of the Genii," much accounted of for the cure of certain diseases and for love philtres. The renown of these fountains is very ancient. Haedo, in his "Topografia," speaks of them as being then known as the fountains of the red, white, black, green genii, &c., and mentions the custom of sacrificing lambs and fowls in this spot, in order to propitiate the spirits, and says that viands were offered to them. "While the sacri-

fices are being performed," he writes, "little wheaten cakes and other delicacies which may be acceptable to the genii, are laid upon the ground." These strange heathen rites are still practised, and every Wednesday morning, from sunrise till about ten o'clock, a strange and altogether disgusting spectacle may be witnessed by those curious in such matters. The sacrificators and priests of these unholy mysteries are negroes, while a couple of old negresses—hags—witches—it would be difficult to find a name too ugly to suit them—administer charms, mumble incantations, and greedily count up and quarrel over their pitiful little gains.

The Mahomedan religion, though it acknowledges the existence of such creations as genii, whom it considers to be an intermediate order between angels and devils, some good and others bad, does not certainly permit any kind of observance to be paid to them. Indeed the notion is utterly opposed to the whole teaching of Islamism; and though the Arabs are very superstitious as to charms and amulets, they do not, as a rule, openly lend themselves to this fetish worship. It is maintained chiefly by the negroes, who have never thoroughly abandoned their heathen practices, and, to their shame be it spoken, by the Jews.

Every Wednesday morning, a considerable number of people, chiefly women, will be seen making their way in the direction of Père-la-Chaise, carrying by the legs perhaps one, perhaps two wretched fowls, or even more, destined for sacrifice. Arrived at the spot, the petitioner states his or her grievance or desire to the old negresses, who sit, like Macbeth's witches, cowering over a pan of smouldering charcoal. Probably a bargain has to be struck according to the im-

portance of the boon desired. After considerable muttering, the fowls are handed over to the negro sacrificator; the person on whom the charm is to be wrought kneels on the beach; the fowls, after being anointed with the water of the fountain and held over a pan of incense, are swung solemnly round and round the patient's head, while the incantation is repeated. Again and again the same ceremony. At length the negro, who has all the while been brandishing a gleaming knife in the air with one hand, while he swings the luckless fowls in the other, draws the knife across their throats, displaying a barbarous skill by the manner in which he wounds without killing them. It is from the dying agonies of the victims that the soothsayer draws his auguries of success or failure, to the desire of the petitioner. If the dying bird flutter and struggle to the water, the omen is considered good; if it die at once, it is considered a bad sign. Under these circumstances it may be imagined that the sufferings of the poor creatures are, as a rule, sadly prolonged. At the end of the morning's work the beach is often covered with strewn feathers and blood. Some of the blood of the sacrifice is smeared on the forehead and hands of the devotee, who is afterwards incensed from head to foot, and if it be a love-charm which is desired, a garment that has been worn by the beloved object is treated in the same manner. Finally, a little water from the spring is carried away for future use, and some small coins paid to the negresses, to whom also the sacrificed fowls of right belong—or who anticipate the genii. Scarcely has death relieved the wretched birds from their sufferings, than they are seized upon by certain attendants of the old women, plucked,

and bagged. Judging by the numbers slaughtered, Wednesday must be a feast-day among the negroes of Algiers.

The road winds pleasantly up and down beside the sea, following the indentations of the bay. Shortly, the long high wall which encloses the Catholic cemetery is reached. Opposite to this, on a small rocky point, is the old Fort des Anglais, built in 1580 by the pirate Djafer, in the reign of Hussein, whom he succeeded in the same year. The name and existence of the fort are said to have been owing to the alarm felt by the Algerines, on account of a descent made at this point by some English ships.

In the Catholic cemetery, laid out on the hill-side, are a few handsome monuments, and the graves are, for the most part, literally smothered with climbing roses and other flowers. The large space of ground, so thickly strewn with tombstones, tells a touching tale of the ravages which death makes in a small community in the course of one generation. A very large number of soldiers, killed during the first years of the French occupation, are interred here.

A steep but picturesque path leads through the cemetery, up the mountain side, directly to the pilgrimage church of Notre-Dame d'Afrique, which occupies such a striking position on the spur of Mount Bou-Zarea, and forms so prominent a feature in all the views from the north-west side of Algiers. The church is built in the Byzantine style, with a high central dome rising from a cluster of smaller ones, and flanked by a tall and graceful clock-tower or minaret. It is quite modern, having been begun by Archbishop Pavy in 1858, as a sort of thank-offering for the establishment of the French, and the revival of Christianity, in North Africa. A *black* Virgin (Notre-Dame d'Afrique) occupies the

place of honour on the high altar, and at the feet of the image lie the swords of Marshal Pelissier and General Yusuf. The latter, although a Mahomedan by education, attached himself to the French cause, and proved himself an officer of much ability. His story is altogether a romance. An Italian by birth, he was captured as a boy by the Algerines. As a slave he engaged in an intrigue with one of the beauties of his master's harem, and was, in consequence, thrown into a dungeon and sentenced to death. He however, contrived to escape from confinement, and passing through extraordinary adventures and perils, led the life of a runaway slave until the French landed in Algiers. He at once offered his services to the invader, and, distinguishing himself by various daring acts, eventually rose to the position of general in the French army. In one of the chapels of Notre-Dame d'Afrique is a curious statue of the archangel Michael, in solid silver, valued at about £4,000, which is said to belong to the Neapolitan fishermen (*Murray's Guide*). Around the church are numerous votive offerings, in the shape of crutches, waxen models of arms, legs, eyes, &c., testifying to the miraculous interference of the dusky patroness of the sanctuary, or to the superstitious piety of the Catholic population of Algiers. The church is specially affected by sailors, and many of the offerings are tributes of gratitude for perils passed at sea. Every Sunday afternoon after vespers, a remarkable and most impressive ceremony takes place here. From the little platform in front of the church, which overlooks the sea, a funeral service for the shipwrecked—those whose vast grave lies spread out on all sides as far as the eye can reach—is chanted.

The effect is altogether solemn and beautiful. The view from this point, or indeed, from either of the three sides of the church which look seawards, is magnificent. The church itself—so steep is the hill on which it stands—appears as though built on a rock, which rises sheer out of the transparent sea, while the further shores of the double bay are spread out like a panorama—the valley of Bou-Zarea and St. Eugène on the one hand, and Algiers, the bay, Cape Matifou, and the Djurdjura Mountains on the other. Whether the Mediterranean lies a sheet of liquid blue, dotted here and there by miniature pleasure boats, or whether the waves are dashing with futile vehemence upon the crags at the beholder's feet, the scene is equally entrancing; but the funeral chant, for its grandest effect, should be heard with the hoarse accompaniment of breakers, surging and swaying upon the rock-bound shore. Attached to the church of Notre-Dame d'Afrique are some religious houses, a monastery, and school for Arab boys destined for the priesthood, called *le Petit Séminaire*, established by the Archbishop Lavigerie. From the church, a return to Algiers can be made by carriage-drive, which ascends by a steep winding road cut in the hill through the Cité Bugeaud, or a pathway leads back again by a somewhat abrupt descent, to the Malakoff route and the flower-embosomed village of St. Eugène, most of the houses of which are hidden behind glowing veils of purple bougainvillier.

The path from Notre-Dame d'Afrique opens into the village close to the Jewish cemetery, a large space on the slope of the hill, scattered with stone tombs of a uniform, almost cubical, form, without the slightest ornament or relief—not a shrub nor a flower. It is a melan-

choly-looking place, a very desert in the midst of the flowery paradise that surrounds it, and in its severity and gloom forms a striking commentary on the faith which it represents—a creed in which death is still felt to be a curse and a punishment, from which no Redeemer has taken the sting, making it but the gate of hope to a glorious immortality.

The village of St. Eugène is inhabited to a very great extent by the families of wealthy Jews, whose business takes them daily into Algiers. There are also a number of charming little villas surrounded by gardens, which are let for the winter months. The price of houses at this end of the town, since fashion has left it in the cold shade, is much lower than at Mustapha; but as far as beauty of situation is concerned, it quite equals its more fortunate rival, and is the only suburb of Algiers which is actually on the sea-shore. Before the French occupation, the country houses of the representatives of all the European powers were situated here, a fact which is still recalled, in the name given to a romantic valley bordered with grand old olive and mastic trees, which cuts the village at right angles—the Valley of Consuls. The consulate of the United States (now Campagne Santelli), in the upper part of the valley, is still surrounded by its grand old hedge of cactus, as it was in the time of Mr. Shaler, who, in his "Sketches," has given such an interesting account of the later days of the Regency, and of the bombardment of the city by Lord Exmouth. The old consulate of France is now the country house of the Archbishop of Algiers. It has a handsome marble fountain, in the shape of a gigantic *fleur-de-lis* before the principal entrance, and is

surrounded by extensive gardens. The English consulate (now Campagne Journès), is the house nearest the sea. This is the spot described at so much length and with so much enthusiasm by Mrs. Broughton. Some of the anecdotes related by this lady of the consular life in Algiers at the beginning of the century are very amusing, not the least so of which is the account of the perpetual rivalry of the French and English representatives at the court of the Dey.

"From time immemorial a scuffle for precedence had taken place between the British and French consuls-general, on every occasion on which they had met in the Dey's presence. The consular dignity must on these occasions have been greatly compromised, as it was not by Machiavelian skill that so momentous a point was finally decided, but by the superior agility exercised by his Britannic Majesty's representative, to the no small edification of the long-bearded courtiers, who witnessed this indecent exhibition of European gymnastics. At last it happened that Consul Falconer was determined that a final end should be put to Gallic presumption. On some grand festa he therefore arrived at the palace just before the time of admission to the Dey's presence, and having posted himself in front of the great staircase, patiently awaited the arrival of the French consul, who no sooner came up, than the usual race began until they reached the top of the stairs, and were in the august presence of his highness, when Mr. Falconer suddenly caught his antagonist round the waist, and quietly dropped him over the banister into the court below, then walked forward and paid his respects to the Dey amid the shouts of laughter and applause of all present. Happily the poor Frenchman escaped without any other hurt than the mortification he experienced, which ever after prevented him and his successors from entering the lists with John Bull."

In consequence of these summary proceedings of the British representative, and also of the war which was at this time raging between the two nations, the French and English consuls at Algiers were in a continual state of feud, the French consul even refusing to meet the English consul at the Dey's receptions, when in the time of Mr. Blanckley

(Mrs. Broughton's father) a happy reconciliation took place, owing to an outrage of the Dey on the Danish representative. Indeed, the life of an European consul during the time of the Regency could have been no very tranquil or easy existence. Not only was he compelled to submit to various degrading ceremonies, such, for example, as being compelled to walk bareheaded, even in the hottest sun, the moment he came in sight of the Dey's palace; in waiting for an audience, to sit upon a stone bench in the public passage; when at length admitted, to respectfully salute the potentate's foot; but, neither his liberty nor life was safe from outrage or attack, if a sudden gust of ill-humour swept over the mood of the whimsical tyrant.

The prestige of the English consul was naturally great at the Algerine court; and though, from the disgraceful custom of purchasing immunity from piracy, all the nations of Europe, England included, were regarded but as subjects and tributaries by the insolent government of the Dey, the English fleet continually cruising about the Mediterranean, had proved itself sufficiently powerful to impress the Oriental mind with a notion of possible disaster, should England be roused by a special outrage. At the same time, so far from secure did our consul feel his position at Algiers to be, that we learn how a system of private signalling was agreed upon between Mr. Blanckley and the admiral of the British fleet in case of difficulties arising; and the nature of the communications which it was considered *might* be required, is sufficiently suggestive of the perilous outlook of the times.

On the slightest dispute or difficulty arising between any country and the Algerine Government, it was customary for

the Dey at once to imprison the consul representing that country, and to treat him with every cruelty and indignity. This had occurred on various occasions both to the French and English consuls, and it was a similar outrage on the Danish representative in Mr. Blanckley's time, which led to the peace-making to which we have referred between the consuls of the rival nations. The circumstance is thus related by Mrs. Broughton :—

"Very late one evening, after the gates of the city were closed, my father was informed that the oft-repeated threats of the Dey to put the Danish consul in chains, in consequence of the non-arrival of the expected tribute from Denmark, had been but too truly put in execution, and that he had actually been torn from his agitated wife and family. A Chaous seizing him by the waistband had ignominiously shoved him through the streets to the bagnio, where he was loaded with chains. A more gentlemanly, honourable, or braver man never breathed, and as such did my father esteem him. The indignation which my father felt at such a breach of the privileges, acknowledged even by savage nations as attached to the ambassadorial character, was almost intolerable for him to bear during that long night, and no sooner did daylight appear, than he mounted his horse with the determination of liberating his friend and colleague from the durance vile in which the barbarians had placed him.

"My father rode to the Swedish consul, Mr. Norderling, and asked if any steps had yet been taken on the subject, saying that he thought there was but one course to pursue, viz., for the diplomatic corps to go in a body to the palace, and demand the instant liberation of their colleague.

"'But how is all this to be managed?' asked Mr. Norderling. 'How are the points of precedence to be decided?'

"My father at once declared that at such a moment trifles must not be considered, that he would himself call upon the French consul, and ask him to meet him and the others, at the Danish consulate, to determine further proceedings. And thus was the ice of the absurd etiquette of political enmity, between persons formed to suit one another in no common degree, broken through."

The result of the consular conference was, that Mr. Blanckley's idea of a general protest was accepted, and the

whole body of foreign consuls walked through the streets of Algiers two and two, the English and French representatives leading the way arm in arm—a sight, says Mrs. Broughton, which filled the inhabitants with astonishment and alarm, "they nothing doubting that ere long the dreaded prophecy, which predicted the fall of Algiers *when the Christians should be at peace together*, would be fulfilled." Mrs. Broughton's description of the reception accorded to the consular corps by the Dey is sufficiently amusing. Their demand for an audience was, of course, considered an extraordinary intrusion, but they were at length admitted to the presence of the great man.

"The Dey at first received them with a grave but rather surprised manner; gradually, as my father spoke, anger lit up his eyes, and with marked impatience he listened to the frightened dragoman's interpretation; but as soon as he learnt the determination to which the consular body had come (which was that in the event of the Dey's refusing to liberate their colleague they would all instantly quit the country), his rage burst all bounds; he literally bounced up from his seat and fell down again, his legs still retaining their tailor position, whilst he pulled his beard, the greatest sign of a Turk's indignation, and, muttering in Turkish, words almost unintelligible, literally foamed.

"When the storm had a little subsided he asked how it was possible my father could act as he was doing; that he thought he would be glad an enemy should thus be punished—was not England at war with Denmark?

"'And that is the very reason,' replied my father, 'that the Government of that country has not yet been able to send the tribute, while your Highness in defiance of his inviolable character, has subjected the unfortunate consul to the greatest ignominy.'"

In the end, the protesters obtained a surly permission to go themselves and liberate their imprisoned colleague.

"They left the palace in the same order as they had entered, and so continued their procession to the slave's bagnio at the Marina, where it will be needless to say that their indignation was greatly aggravated, on

finding the brave and generous Ulrich heavily ironed, and compelled to work with the rest of the slaves, with a chain round his leg upwards of fifty pounds in weight."

The same outrage was committed twice more during Mr. Blanckley's career at Algiers—once on the person of the Dutch consul, an aged man, who never recovered from the alarm and the ill-usage to which he was subjected during his imprisonment, and on another occasion on the person of the Spanish consul, Don Pedro Ortez di Gugarti. During the bombardment of Algiers by Lord Exmouth, the English consul was, as has been already stated, thrown into prison, while his wife escaped to an English ship in the disguise of a midshipman.

CHAPTER XXI.

POINTE PESCADE.—CAPE CAXINE.—THE LIGHTHOUSE.—THE BONE-CAVE.—GUYOTVILLE.—THE DOLMENS.—SIDI FERRUCH.—STAOUËLI.—THE TRAPPIST MONASTERY.—CHÉRAGAS.

> "In shirt of hair and weeds of canvas dressed,
> Girt with a bell-rope that the Pope has blessed."
>
> *Cowper.*

This excursion occupies a whole day by carriage (twenty francs), and it is well to start early so as to avoid the heat of noon, *déjeuner* being taken at the Trappist monastery.

THE route is the same as that of the preceding chapter, following the line of shore through the village of St. Eugène and the Valley of Consuls.

Beyond this, the coast scenery becomes bolder and more rocky, the villas fewer and farther between, until, at a distance of about three miles and a half from Algiers, a rocky reef running out into the sea is reached. This is known as Pointe Pescade, so called, because the fishing-boats were accustomed to seek shelter in the little creek which the rocks enclose. There was formerly a Turkish fort here mounted with four pieces of cannon, erected, it is said, because a foreign galley once ran in between the rocks during the night, and in the morning got safely off again under the very eyes of the Algerine pirates. Only the ruins of the fort remain.

At the extreme end of the reef, on a rock overhanging the sea, are the ruins of another and still older fortress, known as Barbarossa's Castle. A sentinel box or loophole still exists, through which the old pirate was accustomed, according to tradition, to "sweep the seas." It affords an excellent look-out for the French preventive men of the coastguard service who are now established here. At the Pointe are a couple of restaurants much frequented by excursionists from Algiers, where an excellent *déjeuner* may be obtained, the oysters of the Pescade being held in especial repute. Beyond the Pointe the country grows wilder: the mountains approach the sea, or are only separated from it by wild uncleared tracts, where the dwarf palm and the stunted prickly pear form a kind of tangled brushwood, over which all manner of wild flowers and creeping plants twine and entangle themselves in luxuriant confusion. On the heights, a few Arab houses, here and there, glisten white against their dark green background of hill-side, and an ancient fortified and now deserted mansion, every now and then reminds the passing traveller of the days, not so long ago in this country, when every man's house was of necessity his castle.

Six miles from Algiers is Cape Caxine, on which is situated the lighthouse, having a revolving light of the first order, visible twenty-five miles. The light is reflected by sixteen crystal plates of marvellous brightness, which were exhibited in the Paris Exhibition of 1863, and cost each, it is said, £600. The lantern, which is reached by one hundred and sixty-seven steps, is moved by clockwork, which has to be wound up once in every six hours. The whole is well worthy of a visit, but

the view, except seawards, is limited. Opposite to the entrance of the lighthouse is a small café, where the key and candles must be obtained for exploring a curious cavern, which has been discovered in the face of the rock half a mile farther on. The entrance is by a small opening in the hill-side, about sixty feet above the road, and the cave itself consists of two large chambers, approached by several long passages. Into one of the chambers, which is perhaps six or seven yards across, light and air are admitted by a natural opening in the rock above. The roof and sides of the cave seem to be of a kind of fine sandstone, which takes the form of stalactites, and the soil is of loose dark sand. The opening out of this cavern some ten years ago, caused the greatest excitement among Algerian savants, and from the discoveries of bones and flint instruments in it, there can be little doubt that it is another of those mysterious pre-historic bone-caves, which have in various parts of the world attracted the attention of the learned, and which are believed to have been the residence of man, in his very earliest and most savage state.

The entrance of the cavern was, at the time of its discovery, closed by rough flags of stone, and while some scientific critics are of opinion, that the cavern may have been in use as a place of refuge during Roman times—possibly affording an asylum to the persecuted Donatists—others are decided, that the narrow entrance was closed by the savage hands of the mysterious pre-historic cave-men or troglodytes, never to be opened until a chance pickaxe revealed its existence, but a few years ago. Dr. Bourjot, who interested himself much in the matter, advances various reasons for taking this view, and considers that

the cave was used as a resort of primitive man, not for one but for many generations, since various layers of bones were found embedded in the sand. The bones, he further remarks, could not have been brought to this place by the action of water, as they are not rolled; nor dragged in by wild beasts, as there are no remains of wild animals, such as hyænas or jackals among them. They are chiefly the bones of the ox and the antelope, the larger bones having been broken for marrow, as in the case of many of the European bone-caves. The sand in which they were buried is not sea-sand, but must have been carried from the adjacent valley, the shells found in it all belonging to the earth-snail, which is very abundant in this neighbourhood. No sea-shells of any kind were found. Stones calcined by fire were discovered in the cave, together with stone and flint instruments, which seem to point to the polished-stone or neolithic period. The bones and implements may be seen at the rooms of the Société de Climatologie in the Rue Bruce. This is the scientific view of the history of the cave; but, looking to its extent and easy communication with the shore, it is almost incredible that it was not made use of in later times, if not as a dwelling, at least as a place where treasure could be easily stored, or booty secured. Be that as it may, the cave is interesting from its peculiar formation and large extent, as well as from its pre-historic claims. At this point the vine begins to be occasionally cultivated, but the vineyards do not appear to be particularly flourishing, and the general aspect of the country is wild and barren, presenting in some respects the appearance of a Scotch moor. Eight miles and a half from Algiers the road passes through Guyotville, so called after the Comte de Guyot,

Director of the Interior from 1840 to 1846. The settlement was built on the site of an Arab village, Aïn Benian. It contains about five hundred inhabitants, and is said to be a thriving community; but, in spite of the vineyards in which it is situated, and on which its prosperity depends, it is rather a melancholy-looking and deserted place. Beyond it on the sea-shore are some curious Roman quarries.

From this village a path leads across the fields to the left (about one mile), to the farm *Saumé*, where are to be seen a considerable number of megalithic monuments, such as are common in Brittany and other parts of Europe, known as dolmens—that is to say, a large tabular stone supported upon four upright ones. Some few years since, there must have been a vast number of these curious monuments in this spot. Through many ages they had been left undisturbed by the reverence or superstitious fear of succeeding races, but they were being rapidly demolished by the French colonists, and would probably long since have disappeared altogether, had it not been for the antiquarian tastes of the late M. Berbrugger, who exerted his influence to have the monuments spared, and who exhumed from the graves many interesting remains. He attributed the presence of the Celtic form of tomb in this spot, to the encampment here in Roman times of an Armorican cohort; but the later researches of M. Bertherand, have decided the dolmens to be of a much earlier period. Indeed, he claims for them an antiquity of perhaps three thousand years. All the tombs turn eastward. Their form is identical, being slabs of rock rectangular in shape, and more or less regular—but all denoting that some instrument, however rough, must have been used to fashion

them. The upper stones on some of them are very large —eleven feet long by four broad. The bones were discovered a very little way beneath the surface, each tomb containing a considerable number of skeletons of persons, of all ages and both sexes.

To quote a paper written on the subject by M. Berthe-rand—

"We may suppose that long before the time when Dido founded Carthage, a troop of savages almost naked, or clothed only by the skins of beasts, came here on their march from the east, west, or north, seeking a country where game abounded, hunger being always a very potent agent in the dispersion of savage nations, that is to say, people who live entirely by the spoils of the chase.

"For arms these warriors had hatchets of stone well polished, with handles of wood bound together by strings of ox-hide.

"The chiefs of the clan doubtless judged such a spot favourable for the encampment of their horde; game and water were in plenty, caverns and numerous blocks of stone scattered about the valley provided, or were ready to provide shelter.

"Before finally deciding, the pleasure of the gods was doubtless consulted.

"On the plateau from which so glorious a prospect over sea and land was to be obtained, a great stone altar, a dolmen, was erected in honour of the god whom the barbarians worshipped—Dagon, it might have been, or Moloch—he, who under whatever name adored, so often required the human sacrifice, to avert his vengeance or propitiate his favour. This obtained, the tribe locates itself.

"Then in a short while comes death, perhaps to some aged member of the band, wearied with the journey from distant hunting-fields.

"The priest, a branch of myrtle in his hand, walks seven times round the space made to receive the body in the earth. For funeral-oration he mutters a charm to keep away evil genii. Ferocious howls from the assembled tribe serve as funeral-rites, but women bring vases roughly moulded with the hand, and sun-dried, formed from the clay of the ravine, and in them store wild honey, fruits, and acorns for the dead one to eat—proof surely that even these early savage people, were possessed with some faint glimmering notion of the immortality of the soul. Finally, enormous stones are rolled to the freshly covered grave and set up as mementoes—well-nigh everlasting."

On the dolmens is no word or inscription. Most probably these people had no knowledge of thus perpetuating themselves, but their rude monuments have endured through countless ages, while the written epitaphs of later times have disappeared and been lost. It is considered that the dolmens of Guyotville were the tombs of several generations, and though belonging to a remote antiquity, are probably the relics of a people of later date and more advanced civilization than the cave-men of Pointe Pescade. In the tombs were found, besides the skeletons, arms and pottery, both copper and bronze rings and bracelets, and M. Berbrugger discovered a bronze fibula of very perfect workmanship, together with pottery of a much finer sort mixed with the coarser, which therefore led him to affix a later date than has since been assigned to the megalithic monuments; but other antiquarians believe, that these discoveries point rather to a connection which the wandering savage tribes had, either in the way of barter or plunder, with the more civilized nations who at the same epoch, may be supposed to have inhabited the eastern side of the Mediterranean. The spoils of the dolmens may also be seen in the Museum of the Société de Climatologie.

From Guyotville the high-road quits the sea, and passes through a flat, sandy, and barren country, covered with low brushwood or gorse, which is the home of a vast population of rabbits and other small game—the larger game, which once formed for the sportsman a grand attraction in the neighbourhood of Algiers, having been driven by civilization further into the interior. At the time of the French conquest, hyænas and jackals prowled about the city walls, and a wanderer in an unfrequented suburban path, might

possibly have an exciting meeting with a lion or puma. Scarcely an Arab tale or legend is perfect without its lion-encounter episode, and during the early years of the French occupation, a visit from one of these prowling monarchs of the forest, was not of unfrequent occurrence to the inhabitants of scattered villages, while it was no uncommon thing, for a sentry to be devoured at his post by a panther or other beast of prey. But these have all disappeared, at least from the cultivated portions of Algeria, the wild boar and the jackal being alone left to represent the savage fauna of this part of Northern Africa, and these are now becoming rare. The French Government give a reward of a franc and a half for every jackal killed, fifteen francs for a hyæna, and forty francs for a lion or panther.

Staouëli, ten miles from Algiers, is a pleasant-looking neat village, planted with trees in cross avenues after the universal French fashion, and possessing a pretty little church. It is surrounded by vines and fig-trees, which constitute its wealth. A bridle-path leads from Staouëli to Sidi Ferruch. A better though longer road to it turns to the right about a mile farther on.

Sidi Ferruch has not in itself anything to arrest the traveller's attention. Its interest is solely historical, as the landing-place of the French army of invasion in 1830. It was at this time but a sandy tongue of land stretching out some three-quarters of a mile into the sea, with a kind of natural platform at the end, formed of rocks piled up to a considerable height, in the centre of which stood an old Spanish fortress called the Torre Chica (little tower), and at the foot of the fortress, in a wood of fig-trees, wild vines, laurels and caroubas, and

beneath the shade of a magnificent palm-tree, the koubba of a much-venerated marabout, Sidi Ferruch, or Ferredji, who was buried there with his companion, Sidi Roche. The legend touching these two is as follows:—Roche was a Spanish sea-captain, who, having landed on the peninsula, and made friends with the holy hermit who lived there, invited him into his ship for the treacherous purpose, as it seemed, of kidnapping him. No sooner was Sidi Ferruch on board, than the Spaniard gave orders for his vessel to set sail, the wind being favourable for conveying them over to the Spanish coast. All through the night the ship sped swiftly through the waves, notwithstanding which, when morning dawned, the Spaniard perceived to his astonishment, that his vessel was exactly in the place where she had been the previous day—opposite the peninsula of Sidi Ferruch. Alarmed at the probable consequences of detaining the protected of Heaven any longer, the captain made the greatest possible haste to set the holy man on shore, and, expressing his penitence for the trick which he had played him, set off once more, as he hoped and believed, on his voyage. Again the good ship ploughed the waves; again, all sails set—the favouring breeze should have carried the Spaniard gaily homewards. Again to his horror when morning dawned, nothing met his gaze but the stretch of African shore, and the wooded peninsula of Sidi Ferruch. The fact was, in his hurried disembarkation the holy man had forgotten his slippers, and the elements had refused to aid the Spaniard's voyage until these were restored. Struck by this double-miracle, Roche it is said, left his ship, attached himself to the person of the saint, was converted to Mahomedanism,

lived, died, and was buried on the spot where the singular manifestation of Divine favour took place. On the side of the peninsula is now a small village, founded in 1844 by some Breton fishermen for the purpose of sardine fishing, but it does not seem to be in a particularly flourishing condition. On the west of the fort are the ruins of a Christian church of the Roman epoch, dedicated to St. Januarius, and a club with iron spikes found among the débris, is supposed to be a relic of the saint who was killed A.D. 410! A new fortress and barrack capable of accommodating two thousand men, have been built on the site of the old koubba. The entrance to the barrack, ornamented with sculptured trophies of war and peace by M. Latour, bears the following inscription:—

ICI, LE 14 JUIN, 1830,
PAR L'ORDRE DU ROI CHARLES X.,
SOUS LE COM. DU GÉNÉRAL DE BOURMONT,
L'ARMÉE FRANÇAISE,
VINT ARBORER SES DRAPEAUX,
RENDRE LA LIBERTÉ AUX MERS,
DONNER L'ALGÉRIE À LA FRANCE.

It is curious that an Arab tradition is said to have long existed to the effect that the Europeans would enter Algeria by Sidi Ferruch; but the same prophecy also predicted that they would leave it by the plain of Isser. It is also remarkable that the exact plan of the French campaign had been laid out, correct in every particular, by Mr. Shaler, the American consul, in his "Sketches of Algiers," written twenty years before. He is recommending the conquest and colonization of Algeria very strongly to the English, since "Great Britain is the only European power of modern times, that has founded colonies upon con-

stitutional or chartered principles, whose inhabitants have in consequence discovered a love of liberty and an aptitude for self-government;" and adds—

"The several expeditions against Algiers where land forces have been employed, have landed in the bay eastward of the city, which evidences an unpardonable ignorance of the coast and topography of the country, for all means of defence are concentrated there. But it is obvious that any force whatever, might be landed in the fine bay of Sidi Ferruch without opposition, whence by a single march they might arrive upon the heights which command the Castle del Emperador, when as nothing could prevent an approach to the foot of the walls, they might either be scaled or breached in a very short time. This position being mastered, batteries might be established on a height commanding the city, where are the ruins of a fortress which is called the Star, and which the jealous fears of this Government caused to be destroyed, for the reason that it commanded the citadel, and consequently the city. The fleet which had landed the troops would by this time appear in the bay to distract their attention, when Algiers must either surrender at discretion, or be taken by storm."—*Sketches of Algiers. W. Shaler*, 1812.

Were the tenses of this paragraph altered it would absolutely describe the tactics of the French invading army. Indeed, it is admitted by French writers on the French conquest, that their best information on the subject of Algeria was derived from Mr. Shaler's work.

The same accurate observer adds—

"Moreover, the cost of the conquest need not deter any nation, for the war material existing in the capital, together with the public treasury—the fruits of three centuries of depredation on the trade of the world—which has been rated as high as fifty millions of dollars, would naturally in such an event become the prize of the conqueror, and in all probability would equal in amount the expenses of the conquest."

A prediction which, as we have seen, was more than fulfilled (page 120). It was in the year 1827 that the insult was offered by the Dey to the French consul, M. Duval, which

eventually led to the invasion of Algeria—but a considerable time elapsed between the offence and the retribution. For a long period indecisive counsels prevailed in Paris, and though the French fleet attempted a blockade of the port of Algiers, very little result was obtained. It was impossible to blockade the whole coast, the French ships were continually driven from their insecure moorings by gales, and the Dey, it is said, was accustomed to watch their discomfiture from his tower of observation on the Kasba, and to make merry at their expense, while the unfortunate squadron, struggling with a sudden Mediterranean storm, was expecting every moment to be driven on the rocks of this inhospitable African shore, to share the fate of the *Silène* and *Aventure.*

"It was not until the hope arose of covering by a glorious enterprise the unpopularity of a certain French minister (M. de Polignac) that the Government took seriously into consideration, the question of punishing the three-year old insolence of the African potentate."—*L'Algérie. M. Berbrugger.*

The Mediterranean squadron was recalled, and on the 25th May, 1830, an army of twenty-five thousand men, under the command of General de Bourmont was embarked at Toulon. Arrived on the coast of Africa, they twice attempted to land, and twice gave up the attempt, until at length, influenced by the advice of the American consul, it was decided to choose as the place of landing that peninsula of Sidi Ferruch, of which he had spoken. The whole of the first division was landed without the slightest molestation; then a few shots were fired from an old Turkish fort on the peninsula, but the resistance offered was of the very feeblest. It was evidently part of

the policy of the Moorish Government not to contest this point. It had not forgotten the rich spoil which Algiers had acquired from the expedition of Charles V., and no doubt intended that the French should likewise be caught in a trap of their own setting. Nothing else can account for the indifference with which the Algerians permitted a large invading army to set foot, without opposition, on their shores. However this may be, by mid-day of the 14th June the whole of the troops had landed, and for twenty days longer the disembarkation of war-material continued without intermission and almost without difficulty.

"Magnificent weather, a calm sea, and the foolhardy security of the Dey, all tended to aid the enterprise. A Mussulman would have seen in this combination of circumstances, an assurance that the finger of God was opening to Christians the mysterious door of Africa. The French army, too civilized to be thus religious, only saw in them the happy chances of war."—*L'Algérie. Berbrugger.*

Again to quote the same author—

"The spectacle which met the eyes of our soldiers on landing was truly magnificent. On the land-side the chain of the little Atlas extending from east to west attracted attention. In that pure and transparent atmosphere, every crag or cleft of the mountains was clearly defined against the blue sky, in spite of the great distance at which they lay. In front of them extended the great plain of the Metidja, having at this point the appearance of a half circle, the extremities of which approached the sea. Between this plain and the Mediterranean, the eye rested with pleasure on a line of low hills, varying in height and clothed with luxuriant vegetation, whose feet were washed by the clear waves. These hills were the Sahel, a word which signifies the shore. Along the coast westward the view was equally imposing. For leagues extended the remains of an ancient Roman city, venerable débris, which seemed to have survived to our day, only to excite in a great European nation, the ambition of reviving the past glories of this grand but neglected country. In the far distance rose the great mass of the Tombeau de la Chrétienne."

The French army encamped upon the peninsula, and, says an eye-witness—

"This point of earth became at once, as by magic, a camp, a port, an arsenal, almost a town—with here, cafés, restaurants, bakehouses, and shops; there, a hospital, a park of artillery, an artist's studio—for even artists had joined the expeditionary army, for the sake of profiting by the beautiful country we were about to conquer, and the very day of their arrival had set to their peaceful work to the sound of cannon, and almost under the balls of the enemy. It almost seemed as though France, with her arts, civilization and energy, had migrated entire to the desolate shores of Africa."—*Voyage de Mont Rond.*

The road between Sidi Ferruch and Staouëli, and from thence inland to the Trappist monastery, was the work of the French soldiers on their first landing in Algeria, the first thread of that marvellous net-work of civilization which they have cast about the land. The country through which the road runs, is flat, sandy, and even yet partly uncleared, until the estate owned and cultivated by the Trappist recluses is reached. In the year 1843, permission to build a monastery in this spot, and a grant of some two thousand five hundred acres of land, were obtained from the Government by this religious order. The land was then almost a desert, or rather a jungle of brushwood and palmetto, the favourite haunt of the wild-boar. The exertions of the Trappist brethren have resulted in covering it with vineyards, corn-fields, and gardens. The rule of this order, founded in the twelfth century by Rotrou Comte de Perche, who built a monastery in the department of Orme (France), called La Trappe, is very strict. Within the walls of the monastery the monks are not permitted to speak. They eat twice only in the twenty-four hours—during Lent but once—and they do not touch animal food at any time.

The walls of their refectory, &c., have for ornament, pious mottoes, among which the famous "S'il est triste de vivre à la Trappe, qu'il est doux d'y mourir," is conspicuous.

It is doubtless well for the recluses that all the hours from sunrise to sunset, except those passed in religious exercises, are spent in hard manual labour, and for the most part in the open air. They are assisted in their labours by bands of military prisoners, supplied by the Government.

A beautiful farm is attached to the monastery, and the monks pride themselves on their breeds of cattle, horses and sheep. They chiefly employ themselves in the extremely mundane occupations of distilling perfumes, for which purpose they cultivate enormous geranium-fields, and in the production of wine, for which they are celebrated. The "cellar" is one of the chief sights of the monastery, over which strangers (gentlemen) are willingly conducted, but the rule does not permit a woman's foot to cross the threshold of the establishment. In order therefore that ladies may partake in the benefits of Trappist hospitality, which is proverbial, a couple of small refectories have been built just without the walls, where two brothers of the order receive all visitors with a kindly and simple grace, and where the best cheer the monastery affords is spread upon the snowy wooden board—bread, butter, cheese, fruit, and excellent wine, all home-made. A box for alms enables visitors to acquit themselves of pecuniary obligation for these hospitalities; and wine, geranium-essence, carvings, photographs, and other keepsakes, may also be bought. Miss Edwards, in her pleasant book, describes her visit to the monastery:—

"One of the brothers superior entertained us; he was a shrewd, cheerful-looking man of fifty, quite *au courant* with the affairs of the outer world, quick to read character, and apt, I should say, at ruling his fellow-creatures. We had an animated discussion on the present state of the Roman Church. . . . . The father beat us hollow. He was so witty, so enthusiastic, so well trained in the use of facts, so apt at tripping you up with a truism, that we had nothing to say to him, and he saw it delightedly.

"When other subjects were brought forward, our host had plenty to tell us about his convent and its prospects. He seemed pleased to hear his wine praised, which, with everything else on the table, was the produce of the Trappist farms, and brought out some oranges of particular flavour as a special little attention.

"We were quite sorry to go, and promised the father we should not easily forget either our talk, or our entertainment at Staouëli.

"There is something else too at Staouëli that one never forgets, and that is a magnificent group of palms in the courtyard. Palm-trees are so scarce about Algiers, that one's heart thrills with pleasure to see them."—*A Winter with the Swallows.*

The date of Miss Edwards's visit was 1867. Since then the beautiful palm-trees have discourteously been enclosed within the convent precincts, and ladies' gentle hearts are no longer enabled to thrill with pleasure at the sight of them, the reason being that the fountain beneath them was an object of superstitious reverence to the Arab women, who were accustomed to make pilgrimages to the spot, very much to the distraction of the pious brethren, who were thus forced to take the matter, and the palm-trees into their own hands. The ground which the monastery and its adjuncts occupy, is the spot where the first battle was fought by the French in 1830. On the morning of June the 19th, the French perceived on the other side of a low range of sand-hills, a vast encampment of Arabs. The Dey, having at length roused himself from his extraordinary apathy, had sent a large army under the command of his

son-in-law, Ibrahim Agha, to oppose the invader. With him were the Beys of Constantine, Oran, and Tittery, who had obeyed the summons of their liege, the sovereign of Algiers; and the whole army of defence amounted to nearly fifty thousand men. The only remarkable feature about this battle was the brilliant onslaught of the Turkish cavalry, who rode in their headlong course right through General de Bourmont's divisions, and perished almost to a man on the bayonets of the French squares. They were, however, unable to save the fortunes of the day, and the Arabs retreated in confusion, leaving their camp of four hundred tents, thirteen pieces of artillery, two mortars, a hundred camels, and an immense quantity of provisions, in the hands of the French. The foundation-stone of the Trappist monastery was laid upon a bed of bullets, relics of the fight. Two miles from La Trappe, on the road to Chéragas, will be observed on the left, a koubba, that of Sidi Khralef. A second battle fought on this spot on June the 24th, 1830, definitely opened the route to Algiers for the French invading army.

Chéragas, seven and a half miles from Algiers, situated at the entrance of the plain of Staouëli, is a pretty though scattered village of two thousand inhabitants. The houses stand in the middle of gardens, and in the principal square is a fountain ornamented with a bronze bust of Marshal Pelissier. The streets are planted with rows of fine trees. There are a church, a school for boys and girls, and an asylum for children. The community is a specially prosperous one, being occupied in various flourishing manufactures. The country round is very fertile, producing all kinds of cereals, tobacco, olives,

cotton and flax; there are in the neighbourhood large geranium plantations and distilleries for making perfumes, and an extensive factory of what is called by the French "crin végétal," a fibre produced from the palmetto or dwarf-palm, with which the virgin soil of Algeria is so largely covered, and which is used for baskets, mats, mattresses and other purposes. A manufacture of cheese known as "brie de Chéragas" is also much esteemed. From Chéragas, the country which has hitherto been flat and uninteresting, becomes more hilly and picturesque, the road ascending and descending amidst plantations of olives and eucalyptus, bordered on each side by grand hedges of cactus. On the highest point of the road, a splendid view of the whole coast is to be obtained, from Sidi Ferruch as far as Tipasa. At the Bivouac des Indigènes several roads branch off, to the left that leading to Bou-Zarea, to the right to Douera. The central road is that of El-Biar, which leads by the Fort de l'Empereur (see Chapter XIX.) to Algiers.

CHAPTER XXII.

MAISON CARRÉE.—RUSGANIA.—BOU-FARIK.

"While fancy brings the vanished piles to view,
And builds imaginary Rome anew."
Pope.

"Where merchants most do congregate."
Merchant of Venice.

AN excursion, interesting chiefly to those whose tastes are antiquarian, is by Maison Carrée to the ruins of the old Roman city of Rusgania.

Diligence twice a day to Matifou, three-quarters of a mile beyond Rusgania, the distance to the latter place being about fifteen miles and a half. In a carriage the excursion occupies the day.

The coast road must be followed—the Route de Constantine—which, after passing L'Agha, turns to the sea on the lower side of the Champ de Manœuvres and the Jardin d'Essai, past the public *abattoir*, or slaughter-house, all meat coming from which, is compelled to bear a stamp as a certificate of its fitness for food. Just past the Oasis de Ste. Marie and the Jardin d'Essai, is a magnificent plantation of aloes, which were intended to be utilized in some manufactory, but which are now only ornamental. As the town is left behind, the road passes through luxuriant market-gardens, cultivated chiefly by colonists from Port Mahon in

Minorca, who make the best gardeners in the country. Three miles and a half from Algiers is Hussein Dey, with the State tobacco manufactory on the site of the old palace, several factories of different kinds, and the beautiful eucalyptus plantations of Dr. Trottier, one of the first and most ardent propagators of this invaluable tree in Algeria. It was on the shore at Hussein Dey that the Spanish invading force under Diego de Vera, which had for object the restoration of the son of Selim-ben-Teumi on the throne of Algiers, landed in 1516. The young man, son of the murdered emir, made one of the expedition. As on a later occasion, the elements fought against the Spaniards. A sudden storm destroyed their fleet, and four hundred prisoners were left in the hands of the ruffianly Barbarossa.

Some hundred yards further, between the shore and one of the small batteries which guard this part of the coast, is a little ruined Moslem cemetery, which, together with the battery, recalls a third Spanish invasion of Algiers under O'Reilly, in the year 1775. On the 1st of July in that year, a large force, consisting of three hundred and forty-four ships and twenty-three thousand troops, sailed into the Bay of Algiers. The Turks, assembling a considerable army, marched to the shore to oppose the landing of the invaders, but the ships opening a heavy fire upon them, they were compelled to retreat. Not until the 8th of the month did the Spaniards attempt a landing, which was then most successfully accomplished, the sea, on this occasion only, showing them favour, and the Arabs watching their proceedings without any attempt at molestation. The Arab army retreated before the Spaniards; the Spaniards, confident of victory, pursued up the wooded heights of the

Sahel, and found themselves in a short time, caught as in a maze of narrow paths and impenetrable brushwood, from which their enemies attacked them on all sides. They turned and fled precipitately. This was the fate of one division of the invading force. Meanwhile the tributary Beys of Tittery and Constantine had come to the assistance of the Algerine potentate, and the combined armies met the main body of the Spaniards in the plain. In the front of the Mussulman force was a body of five hundred camels. At the unexpected charge of these uncouth-looking animals, who were at that time quite unknown to the Spaniards, a sudden terror spread through their ranks, and joining the flying division from the mountains, the whole army, in panic-stricken confusion, made their way as best they might to their ships, leaving two thousand behind them wounded or dead. This was not the only occasion on which camels had a terrifying effect upon European troops. In some of Abd-el-Kader's battles, the panic which the sight of these unwieldy warriors produced among the French was very remarkable; and we are also told of a little incident peculiarly illustrative of French character, which occurred at the battle of Staouëli and the taking of the Arab camp there, which contained one hundred camels. No sooner were these strange-looking prisoners led forth, than, relates an eye-witness, the whole army stayed from all its occupations, to join in one resounding shout of laughter, at the ungainly appearance of these creatures, and for several minutes nothing could be heard but a perfect roar of amusement.

The Turkish and Arab loss from O'Reilly's expedition did not amount to more than two hundred men. These have their graves in the little cemetery at the foot of the

battery, which still bears the name *Toppa-nat-el-Moujehadin* —the Champions of the Holy War—and the year 1775 is still called by the Arabs "the year of the sand," from the victory which they gained over the Spaniards on the sandy shore of the bay.

The road from Algiers to Matifou has hitherto followed the line of the shore. Beyond Hussein Dey it turns away from the sea, from which it is separated by low sand-hills, the country being wild and woody. On the bank of the Harrach the road turns abruptly to the right, and passes over the handsome bridge of ten arches which, built by Hadji Ahmed in 1697, was repaired or rebuilt by Ibrahim Pasha in 1736, as the inscription upon it states. At this time every passer-by on camel or donkey, was compelled to pay toll by bringing a load of bricks, stones, or sand, to assist in the work of the new bridge. The river is in summer dry, but in winter is often a raging torrent. It was in flood at the time that Charles V. and his army crossed it in their retreat, no bridge then existing.

Maison Carrée, six miles from Algiers, derives its name from an old Turkish fort, which was built at the beginning of the eighteenth century, to guard the bridge over the Harrach, as its Arab name, Bordj-el-Kantara, the fort of the bridge, implies. It was also used by the Turks for overawing and making raids upon the surrounding Arab tribes. From the earliest occupation of the French, a "post of observation" was established at this point, but the neighbourhood was so marshy and pestilential, that for some years it was found impossible to keep troops there except in the winter months. By the treaty of Tafna with Abd-el-Kader, this little fortress was the limit of the French territory east-

ward of Algiers. The surrounding marshes have now been drained, and the country brought into a particularly advanced state of cultivation. Before arriving at the fort an extensive and prosperous farm will be observed. This is worked by Arab orphans, and is the companion institution to the female orphanage between Koubba and Birkhadem, which we have already noticed. Vegetables are the chief products of the farm, artichokes being considered the speciality, besides which the largest vineyard in Algeria has been planted by these young workmen. The ground was bought in 1867, a mere marsh, by Monseigneur Lavigerie, and was placed by this prelate under the care of a religious body calling themselves "Missionnaires d'Afrique." In addition to the care of the orphans, a certain number of the brothers of the order are preparing themselves for missionary work, in the unknown central regions of Africa. They wear the Arab costume, devote themselves to the study of Arabic, and accustom themselves as much as possible to the life of the natives. While the missionaries are thus endeavouring to assimilate themselves to the Arabs, the orphans are, on the contrary, being educated into Europeans. They are taught Latin and French, together with farming on the most approved European system, wear the European dress, and are occasionally sent over for awhile to France, so as to give them some notion of European life.

The fortress of Maison Carrée is now used as a prison for native offenders.

"We were allowed to see over every part of the building, and found the arrangements unexceptionable. Every place was clean, well ventilated, and not overcrowded; the food was wholesome, the hours of work supportable, and though there was a chapel attached, every prisoner was allowed to say his prayers after his own fashion.

"We saw one poor fellow performing his ablutions with dust instead of water, prior to mid-day prayer, herein following out a command of the Prophet. 'If you cannot find water,' says Mahomet, 'rub your face and hands with fine clean sand' (Kor. v.). The cells mostly opened on to the court, and on the threshold of one sat two men, one an old negro, the other an Arab, playing at some sort of game with black and white pebbles. Others were airing themselves; but the greater number were at work in a long shed making baskets. The invalids formed a touching spectacle. They were basking in the sun in the little garden belonging to the hospital, and looked ghastly and despairing, despite of the comparative comforts with which they were indulged.

"There are six hundred inmates in this prison. The chief crime among the Arabs seems to be incendiarism, and next to that, theft."—*A Winter with the Swallows.*

Meat is only allowed once a week in this prison.

A pretty little village has arisen at the foot of the fortress, which was for at least fifteen years, the constant scene of determined attacks and gallant resistance, on the part of the natives and French. The actual village was established in 1851, and contains one thousand two hundred inhabitants, of whom two-thirds are Arabs.

The route passes through the village up a steep picturesque road to the fort.

Beyond, is a well-cultivated country overlooking the vast Metidja, intersected by the river with its swamps, and clumps of scrub and gigantic reeds waving in the breeze, and stretching away into the clear distance to the snowy-peaked mountains.

Nine miles from Algiers is the Fort de l'Eau, situated on a hill. It was built in 1581 by Djafer Pasha, and is so called from the well within the fort, which is famous for its purity and sweetness. The village, which is one of the prettiest in Algeria, was established in 1850, and is occupied almost exclusively by immigrants from Minorca.

From a moor and morass, it has by the industry of these people been converted into one of the most prosperous settlements in the colony. A mile farther is Rassauta, where the Deys of Algiers had their stud. The Prince de Mir, a Polish refugee, in the first years of the French occupation, tried colonization on an extensive scale here, an attempt which proved a failure. A tribe from Constantine was afterwards settled on the spot with no better results. It was finally made a French commune, and is now a scattered, but tolerably flourishing hamlet. The country now becomes wild and uncultivated, with swamps even between the road and the sea. These swamps are accounted for by a quite imperceptible valley or basin in the plain of Metidja.

To reach Rusgania, instead of taking the road to the fort of Oued Khremis, which necessitates a long drive on the sands, the main road should be continued which runs parallel with an older track, probably the Roman highway from Rusgania to Icosium. The Oued Khremis will be passed by a new stone bridge, and from thence a narrow road between walls leads to the ancient town, or to such fragments of ruins as remain. In the time of Charles V. there were, we read, many remains of the Roman city, but since the beginning of the sixteenth century, as we are told by the African historian Leone, it has been used as a quarry for the building of Algiers, added to which the Arabs have continually disturbed the ruins, with an idea that treasure was hidden within them, so that at present very little of interest is left. A vast space in an oblong form is covered with small mounds and hollows, and some vaults with sculptured columns indicate the place

of the Roman baths. "While scrambling over the ruins," writes Lieut.-Colonel Vereker, in 1871, "I was fortunate enough to come upon one of the old city drains, running towards the edge of the cliff, and also on a large reservoir with a deeply sunk well close by, which the Mahonese farmers still make use of for watering their cattle." But in reconstructing the ancient city, it will be evident that a great deal has to be left to the imagination of ardent antiquarians! Medals, sculptured stones, and fragments of mosaic have been found here in large numbers. A Latin inscription which identifies this place as the site of the ancient Rusgania, was discovered by M. Berbrugger built into a vault in the Pêcherie at Algiers. At the time when M. Berbrugger was copying the inscription, an old Moor who was present said he distinctly remembered the building of these vaults—after Lord Exmouth's bombardment—and the discussion which arose between the workmen, as to whether the inscription should be turned inwards or not. The inscription was deciphered by M. Berbrugger as follows:—

"To Lucius Tadius, son of Lucius Quirinus, called Ragatus, the Decurions, Œdiles, Duumvirs, and the quinquennial Duumvirs of Rusgania, and the inhabitants of Rusgania, on account of his merit in furnishing corn and contributing to the public stores. By subscription."

Pliny tells us that Rusgania was a colony of Augustus, and places it immediately to the east of Icosium, but some of the relics which have been found among the ruins seem to point to a much earlier age than the Augustan. Rusgania was a celebrated maritime colony; there is no trace of an ancient port, but the Arab fisherman still hesitates to cast his nets into the sea at this part of the bay, where a portion of the

ruined city is supposed to be submerged, "for tradition tells that strange hands would rend and tear the nets, and that evil luck would follow his barque long after he had forgotten the reason of his mishaps."—*Colonel Walmsley's Sketches.*

The natives call Rusgania, Medina Takious, and make it the scene of the seven sleepers (18th chap. of the Koran), who were cast into a deep sleep for a great number of years, in order to save them from persecution. They were also accompanied by a dog, as to which the tradition is, that the creature followed the seven godly men as they were fleeing to a cave, and refused to be driven away. For God opened his mouth so that he said, "I love those who are dear unto God: go to sleep, therefore, and I will guard you." And their dog stretched forth his fore-legs in the mouth of the cave.

"If thou hadst come suddenly upon them," says a verse of the Koran very truly, "verily thou wouldst have turned thy back and fled from them, and thou wouldst have been filled with fear at the sight of them." When after the space of three hundred and nine years the sleepers awoke, the only consciousness that they had of their long repose, was in the extraordinary length of their hair and nails; and as during their miraculous sleep they kept their eyes open, and were continually turning from right to left and back again, we can imagine that the appearance of the godly men might have been somewhat alarming if, as the Prophet supposes, one had come upon them suddenly! This tradition is taken by Mahomet from an old Christian legend, as to the miraculous interference of God on behalf of seven Christian youths of Ephesus, during the persecution of the Emperor Decius.

At Matifou, three-quarters of a mile farther on this road, are a small village, founded in 1853, and a ruined fort, which was built in 1661, and from which in former days salutes were fired to welcome a new pasha to Algiers. Near the fort is a fountain, called in Arabic by a name which signifies "Drink and go away," in reference to the unhealthy reputation of the neighbourhood.

BOU-FARIK, about twenty-five miles from Algiers, is reached by railway in an hour and a half to two hours, Algerian locomotion not being at a very high rate of speed. The train, the carriages of which are arranged after the Swiss fashion, and are comfortable, ambles leisurely along, affording plenty of time for an outlook over the country. The railway follows the line of coast as far as Hussein Dey, turns inland to Maison Carrée, and then strikes into the plain of the Metidja, between the Sahel and the Harrach.

The history of the Metidja is a curious one. It may be said to have known the heights and depths of prosperity and desolation. When the North-African provinces were the granary of Rome, it is probable that so fertile and large a tract of country—the plain is sixty-two miles long by fourteen broad—furnished its quota. Later on we know that it enjoyed a high degree of prosperity. It was surnamed by the Arabs, on account of its fruitfulness, "The Mother of the Poor." At the beginning of the thirteenth century it was covered with villages, and we learn from Arab historians, that at this time there were on it, thirty towns at which public prayer was offered. It was then ravaged by a powerful mountain tribe, whose chief, Mendil, was afterwards taken prisoner and crucified at Algiers in 1225. In the fifteenth century it was occupied by the

Ben Teumi, a Berber tribe, whose chief, Selem, when reigning at Algiers, called in the Barbarossa brothers to assist him against the Spaniards. Under the rule of the Turks it gradually became depopulated, and as in the case of the Roman Campagna, as man ceased his hold upon it, the earth revenged itself for the neglect with which it was treated, by exhaling poisonous vapours. In 1830 this whole tract of country was but a dreary waste, covered with brushwood and infested by wild beasts—the home only of the Hadjoutes and other marauding and wandering tribes. When the French army for the first time marched across the plain on its way to Blidah, it found some two-thirds of the way from Algiers, a slight elevation, on which were two wells covered with small domes, a white koubba dedicated to Abd-el-Kader-el-Djellani, and four aspens trembling over the well, from the branches of which hung several short pieces of rope. This was the spot where from time immemorial, the Bou-Farik weekly market had been held, and it was seldom that the ropes suspended from the trees, did not bear each their ghastly burden of a human being swaying in the breeze; for at the market, then as now, the Cadi administered justice, and his punishments under the old Turkish rule were apt to be exemplary.

"The actual site of Boufarik was at this time but a marsh, covered for the most part with impenetrable jungle, with here and there pools of standing water, puddles and deep swamps. Not finding any outlet, these waters stagnated on the soil, waiting for the sun to drink them up. . . . Boufarik was reached only by narrow, circuitous paths, which traversed miry fens and bogs overgrown with reeds and bulrushes. At every step, sticks and branches of trees were thrown across the path as bridges, or to fill up some knee-deep quagmire. These muddy causeways, kneaded by the naked feet of the Arabs, were in great part impracticable for horses or mules.

"Boufarik was the centre, the culminating and attracting point, of these foot-ways, which, like the muscles of a body, branched out from thence in every direction, and wound about in serpentine fashion, east, north, and west. The elevation of this particular spot above the surrounding country, its central position in the plain, and also its position on the direct road from Algiers to Blidah, had pointed it out as a convenient spot for the holding of a market."—*Bou-Farik et son Marché. C. T. de Fallon.*

But so pestilential was the neighbourhood known to be, that an Arab saying declared that "not even a snail could live there;" and after the Monday market, both buyers and sellers would hasten away to their villages on the hills, no inducement being strong enough to make them linger after sun-down on the baleful spot. It was certainly a curious contradiction, and a most culpable want of foresight, which induced the French to fix upon this pestilential marsh, for the establishment of one of their chief military settlements. Possibly they did not consult the opinion of the Arab wise-men. Had they done so, they would probably not have believed in the truth of the report given them; but it seems inexplicable that in the face of facts, any advice on the matter should have been needed. However, the position was, in a military point of view, an advantageous one, and the slight matter of healthiness was not taken into consideration. In 1835, the then Governor of Algiers, Count d'Erlon, established a camp at Bou-Farik for fifteen hundred men and six hundred horses, and at the same time thirty-five colonists, small shopkeepers, grouped themselves about the camp in little huts built of bamboo and tree-thatch. The barrack itself was but a wooden shed roughly constructed of logs. But shortly afterwards Marshal Clauzel, successor of D'Erlon, "ordered," we are told, "the creation of a city" on this spot. A vast space was planned out

for the new "centre," which was to be a large fortified town, with streets, hotels, churches, theatres, and what not. Large bodies of colonists were encouraged to settle on the site of the future city, which was, out of compliment to the Marshal, to be called Medina Clauzel. But no sooner did batch after batch of immigrants reach the fever-haunted marsh than they died, and the projected city perished at its birth.

"Not a French settlement in Algeria bears such a death-fraught name as Boufarik. Nowhere throughout the land has civilization gained the victory at such immense cost.

"Wasting ague and malignant fever cut off both old and young. Under the hot autumn sun, the exhalations from the swampy soil became a virulent poison, which the strongest could not withstand. 'They died off like flies,' is the significant spoken epitaph, of the several successive generations of colonists, that tenant the graveyard of what is now a large, flourishing and healthy village. To the genius of mis-rule, which planted a military station and agricultural settlement, in the midst of a thicket hemmed round with marshes, the melancholy distinction of Boufarik is to be assigned."—*Through Algeria. M. S. Crawford.*

At one time the evil was believed to be irremediable, and the settlement was almost abandoned. Nor was malaria the only enemy, powerful though it was, against which the colonists of the fated village had to contend. They were continually exposed to attacks from without, and could scarcely venture out of sight of their own cottages, without risk of being kidnapped or assassinated by the hostile Arabs, who were for ever lying in wait for them. Yet in spite of all these difficulties, and in face of continual protests, the French with remarkable tenacity kept their hold on Bou-Farik; and the end has been a rich reward for their perseverance. Year after year, amid end-

less discouragements, the work of draining, ditching, and planting went on. Here, at a time when the settlement was known by the suggestive name of *La Cimetière*, was established one of the penal camps, to which many of the *proscrits* of 1851 were assigned. At length, by means of unremitting labour, and, as we have seen, at terrible cost, the old evil reputation of the place passed away, and the Bou-Farik of to-day is not only one of the largest, but also one of the most prosperous and healthy of the French settlements in Algeria. The village, which by the census of 1872 contained no fewer than twelve thousand three hundred and forty-seven inhabitants, and is now doubtless much more populous, is laid out very regularly in broad streets, through which streams of fresh water flow, and which are planted with avenues of very large and handsome plane-trees. There is a public garden ornamented with fountains and filled with flowers, as are also the gardens which surround the neat red-tiled houses. The place has nothing picturesque about it.

"We become thoroughly imbued with the idea that we must be again in France, so completely have the French realised, in the midst of an African plain, the dull uniformity of a poor French town, with its 'place,' its one street of cobble-stones, and its two rows of trees."—*Artists and Arabs. H. Blackburn.*

Unpicturesque, however, though it may be in its very primness, the smiling air of comfort which it bears on its face, as contrasted with its traditions, is pleasant to see. The whole country round Bou-Farik is now in a high state of cultivation, and several thriving manufactories are established in the neighbourhood. The old Camp d'Erlon has been converted into an enormous garden, which was

until recently attached to an orphanage under the care of the Jesuit priests, who have similar establishments in other parts of Algiers. These orphans, many of them *enfants trouvés*, are sent over from France to be reared and educated at the expense of the State. They are instructed in farming, and are destined either to become colonists or to enter the army. The institution would appear to be a useful one, and it is only a pity that the education of the children was not intrusted to another order; for the Jesuits, in some way or other, made themselves so obnoxious to the inhabitants of Bou-Farik, that they were actually threatened with violence, and were compelled to beat a retreat from the place. "We are not *dévots*, we colonists," said an inhabitant of Bou-Farik to the present writer; "and then these Jesuits are not simple *religieux*—they are intriguers—politicians."

The beautifully laid-out grounds with their alleys of cyprus and mulberry-trees, which were formerly the pride of the Jesuits, are now rented by a market-gardener, and the orphanage and clergy-house, together with a very handsome and large chapel, ornamented with good stained-glass windows, stand empty, or are only used as occasional storehouses for corn. There is some talk of utilizing these buildings as a hospital, so great is the reputation for salubrity of this once fatal spot. In the courtyard adjoining the deserted schools is one of the original fountains of Bou-Farik, that which was overshadowed by the famous gibbet-trees. The other is still to be seen on the "Place," shaded by plane-trees, where the Arab market is, as of old, held every Monday morning. This is the chief attraction of Bou-Farik to the stranger.

To visit it from Algiers he will either have to leave by the 6 A.M. train, or go there on Sunday, and sleep the night.

This is quite practicable, as there are two or three unpretending, but clean and tolerably comfortable little inns in the village—*Hôtel et Café Bénoît—du Commerce.* Omnibus from the station — no charge. Rooms had better be secured beforehand, and a private sitting-room ordered, as on market-days the village is naturally crowded.

The market, which is attended by some four or five thousand Arabs and Kabyles, besides numerous colonists, is a most picturesque and curious scene. It begins at day-break and should be visited not later than 7 A.M., although the whole proceedings are not concluded much before mid-day. The market is divided into various distinct portions. On one side is the cattle-market, by no means the most pleasing section, since the Arabs have no very great notion of humanity; on the other the horse-fair, where animals not altogether types of the vaunted "Arab steed" are mounted by grand-looking Arabs, and put through their paces. Between these is the Cadi's Court, where all matters in dispute are settled by a grave and turbaned magistrate, who must be possessed of more than Solomon's wisdom, to come to any decision on any subject whatever, amid the general din that assails him, since it seems to be a recognised rule in an Arab court of justice, that complainant, defendant, and counsel on both sides should all speak at once. Through all, the dignitary remains passive and undisturbed, and a kind of happy-go-lucky sentence is pronounced. In front of the Cadi's Court is a long row of Arab tents, before which a score or so of native cobblers are seated, hard at work upon old moccasins,

which have doubtless to be given back to the owners "as good as new" before the end of the fair. A parallel row of camel's-hair tents is occupied by a company of grocers. Here may be seen skins of wild boar filled with olive oil, piles of Sahara dates, dried figs from Kabylia, coffee, rice, and sweet concoctions of unpromising appearance. Every here and there is a café, before which, on the usual oval palmetto-mats, sit groups of smokers and coffee-drinkers, refreshing themselves after the exertion of a "bargain," which on these occasions is a matter of much time and a good deal of breath. In another row will be found all kinds of materials from which native clothing is manufactured; goodly piles of burnous for the men, and delicate striped haiks for the women, as to the purchase of which, their lords and masters have doubtless received many minute instructions, for it need scarcely be said that no women are to be seen at the fair, other than the Spanish and Mahonese vegetable-merchants, who stand behind piles of their fresh lettuces, peas, and artichokes.

It is a scene full of bustle, life, and activity. Here, a couple of kneeling, groaning camels are being laden with purchases. There, a stately figure, scheik of some mountain tribe, stalks grandly along through the crowd, distinguished scarcely at all by his dress, but followed everywhere by salutations both graceful and respectful. Here two friends meeting, fall upon each other's neck after the fashion of the ancient patriarchs. On all sides are hundreds and thousands of dark, swarthy, bright-eyed faces, and majestic forms clad in the grandly folded toga, which modern civilization has discarded, but which, ragged or dirty even as it may be, and, alas! often is, lends a manly

dignity to the human form, which the very best modern tailoring fails altogether to impart. It is a curious fact, but a fact all the same, that the European beside the Arab looks ridiculous. Let his top-hat be ever so shiny, his clothes ever so well-fitting, his form ever so straight, he looks at a disadvantage beside the spare figure and the flowing draperies of the wandering Bedouin whom he despises. To quote M. Fromentin—

"The Arab has one special privilege which, in spite of all, ennobles him—he always escapes being ridiculous. He is poor without being abased. He is sordid without being mercenary. Even his raggedness has a grandeur about it. As a beggar there is in him something of the typical Lazarus or Job."

So writes the one Frenchman among many, to whom the poetical or artistic side of the Arab character has been revealed. Let those who doubt the force of what he writes, wander a brief hour among the Arab crowds at Bou-Farik. Formerly it was not by any means safe for Europeans to attend these native fairs, and troops were called out to protect any strangers who might venture to present themselves at the Bou-Farik market. Now, Europeans and natives mingle peacefully, if not amiably, together, and the only outrage against which an European need guard, is the chance of nimble fingers, Arab or otherwise, making themselves acquainted with the lining of his outside pockets.

CHAPTER XXIII.

BLIDAH.

"Wo die Citronen blühn
Im dunklen Laub die Gold-orangen glühn."
Goethe.

HOTELS.—Hôtel Geronde, in a good open situation, nearest the station. Very clean and comfortable, and most obliging landlord. Excellent food—dinner, 3 fr.

Hôtel d'Orient, on the "Place." Not quite so clean, but extremely good table.

Hôtel de France. Situation inferior, but rooms clean and food good. Charges very moderate.

Hotel omnibuses from the station; no charge. Fiacres, 1 fr. The station is about half a mile from the town.

BLIDAH is a corruption of the Arab *El-Boleida*, the little town.

"Others call thee El-Boleida,
But I call thee Ourida" (the little rose),

sang the Arab poet. And in truth the situation of Blidah justifies all that has been said in its praise. Although the mountains at the foot of which it lies are not very lofty, being only snow-capped during the winter months, and the scenery which surrounds it, is for the most part, pleasing rather than striking, it possesses attractions which are usually found to be irresistible, not the least of which are the mul-

titudinous orange and lemon groves in which it lies almost embedded, true gardens of the Hesperides, where fruit and flower—hope and its fruition—grow together on the tree, and where, amid the glory of colour and the sweetness of perfume, it is hard to say what sense is gratified the most highly.

Blidah is not more than twenty-eight miles from Algiers, and can be visited with its chief attractions in one day, the 6 A.M. or 8.15 A.M. train being taken from Algiers; but as the journey consumes nearly three hours each way, and as the last train from Blidah for Algiers leaves at 3.50 P.M., this will be found altogether an unsatisfactory way of visiting one of the prettiest spots in Algeria. And there are several good and sufficient reasons for making a stay of some days at least, at this town.

In the first place, the hotels, though unpretending, are very comfortable and moderate—the food strikingly better than at Algiers, as indeed seems to be the case in all the country towns, for what reason it would be difficult to say. Secondly, Blidah is an excellent centre for various excursions, either by railway, diligence, or carriage. Thirdly, the air of the place is particularly fresh and invigorating; and when Algiers becomes, as it does with advancing spring, hot and close, Blidah will be found in comparison, cool and refreshing. In the summer it is said to be as hot or even hotter than Algiers, which is tempered by the sea-breezes, but in winter and spring its proximity to the mountains, which retain their snowy caps until about March, makes it colder than the sea-side city. It is, therefore, not advisable for persons in delicate health to visit it too early in the year. Fires will often be in request at Blidah, when

the heat is almost oppressive at Algiers. Added to which, the hotels are all built somewhat after the Eastern fashion, round the sides of a court, the rooms opening out into a balcony which runs round the quadrangle. The court is covered for the most part with a vine-trellis, and serves as a lounging-place, or in summer as a dining-room; but the style of building is more suitable to warm than to cold weather.

With regard to the history of Blidah, M. Piesse writes in his "Itinéraire"—

"Blidah did not, in my opinion, like so many of the cities of Algeria, exist in the time of the Roman dominion; no trace, no ruin, leads us to suppose that it has an antique origin; and Shaw was surely mistaken in considering Blidah to have been the Roman Bida Colonia, which other writers have mentioned as succeeding to the town of Sufosar. In the history of the Berbers, by Ihn-Khaldoun, a city Metidja is cited as having been situated on the plain of the same name, in the position now occupied by Blidah; and El-Bekri (another Arab historian) imagines that Metidja was the same as Kazrouna, which was situated somewhat higher up the mountains than Blidah."

In the old geographer Marmol, we read—

"There are but few cities in this province that we can give any account of, for the ancient cities were demolished in their wars with the Arabians and with some private princes, and though the ruins of them are still visible in some places, yet we are at a loss to know so much as their name."

There can be no doubt that many prosperous ancient towns in this part of Africa, which escaped the ravages of the Vandals and Arabs, were in the thirteenth century razed by the savage desert-tribes, but there seems no reason for differing from M. Piesse's conclusion that "Blidah, the city of white and sparkling walls, smiled on by the sun in the midst of its luxuriant orange-groves, whose perfume reveals her from afar," possesses no claim to antiquity. Under the

Turkish rule, Blidah became a large and prosperous town, with a population of some twenty-five thousand souls, having commercial relations with Tittery (the country south of the lesser Atlas, of which Medeah was the capital), and constant communication with Algiers.

Dr. Shaw writes—

"Bleeda and Medea, the only inland cities of this province, are each of them about a mile in circuit, but their walls, which are chiefly of mud, perforated all over by hornets, cannot much contribute to their strength or security. They are well watered, and have all around them very fruitful gardens and plantations. A branch of an adjacent rivulet may be conducted through every house and garden at Bleeda."—*Dr. Shaw's Travels.*

Blidah does not seem, from this account, to have been made in any way a strong city. It was happy, for the most part, in having no history, and was essentially a town of pleasure, the summer resort of the rich and gay Algerians. Indeed, in its palmy days, at a time when public morals in the Barbary States were not likely to meet with very strict censure, it was known as "Blidah the wicked." So great was its depravity, that a celebrated marabout of the city, whose grave may still be seen in the Sacred Grove, preached like a second Jonah against its sins; and prophesied, so it is said, the destruction of the modern Nineveh.

The prophecy was fulfilled in the year 1825, when a terrible earthquake, which lasted for five days, from the 2nd to the 7th of March, laid the whole city in ruins, threw down houses, mosques and palaces, and buried no less than seven thousand persons in a living grave.

Curiously enough, the koubba of Sidi Mohammed El-Blida, the preacher of righteousness and the foreboder of evil, was spared from the general overthrow. The panic-

stricken survivors of this catastrophe, at first determined to desert the spot which had proved so fatal, and began the building of a new town a little further to the north, but very shortly, as it seemed, they returned to their old haunts, unwilling to abandon a site which presented so many natural advantages.

When the French, five years after the earthquake, first entered Blidah, they found the town, although still showing traces of the calamity, rebuilt and populous.

The streets at this time, consisted entirely of one-storied whitewashed buildings, arranged after the native fashion, in narrow and tortuous lanes, across which extended trellis-work, overgrown with vines and creepers.

It was at Blidah, it will be remembered, that the French received their first check in Algeria, General de Bourmont finding on his return from an expedition to Medeah, that the troops he had confidently left in the town, had been attacked and cut to pieces, and being himself, with the main body of his army, glad to beat a retreat upon Algiers.

In the November of the same year, 1830, the inhabitants of Blidah, who, whatever their reputation for luxury in olden days, certainly proved themselves anything but cowardly, or wanting in manly virtue in the defence of their country, made a determined resistance to Marshal Clauzel, who had set himself the task of avenging the disaster of his predecessor.

Blidah was one of the towns which suffered from the rapacity and severity of the Duc de Rovigo, being given over to sack by his orders on the 20th of November, 1834.

It made common cause with Abd-el-Kader in his first war with the French, and was the scene of constant

struggles, during which its beautiful orange and lemon groves were ruthlessly destroyed. It was not definitely in the possession of the French, until ceded by the treaty of the Tafna in 1838, when it was occupied by Marshal Valée.

At this time, in order to conciliate the inhabitants who had proved themselves so averse to European interference, the troops were not permitted to enter the town, but were established in two large camps outside it. To the west, the village of Joinville has been built on the site of one camp, Montpensier, to the east, on that of the other. Europeans were forbidden to occupy or acquire property within the walls of the town.

The inconveniences of this arrangement caused it to be modified in the following year, and the French troops established themselves within the town.

In 1839 the city was invested by a mountain tribe, the Beni Salah, who cut off the water-supplies and blockaded the garrison, whose strait was unknown to their compatriots, either in Algiers or Bou-Farik.

At length, after suffering considerable hardships, a corporal, named Sourdis, undertook to pass through the enemy's lines and obtain relief. His hazardous enterprise succeeding, Marshal Valée at once marched to the aid of the beleaguered troops, whom he relieved on the 31st of December, 1839, after some severe fighting.

A month later, another battle between the Arabs and the French troops, took place among the venerable olives of the Bois-Sacré.

It was not until 1841 that Blidah became an European "centre," or that colonists were encouraged to settle here;

and for several years the French civil population was limited to a few small shopkeepers. The commune has now over seven thousand European inhabitants, which, together with the native population, makes a total of fifteen thousand two hundred and twenty-five souls.

The ancient concrete wall has been replaced by one of stone, some twelve feet high, in the form of a square, with six gates, which are, however, not closed at night.

Before each gate is a small open space, and there is in the centre of the town, a large *Place* (Place d'Armes), surrounded by colonnaded houses, which, in spite of the warnings of former years, are raised to a height of two and three stories.

In the centre of the "Place," which is planted with trees, and provided with seats, is a pretty fountain shaded by palms.

There is another fountain in the Place Bab-es-Sebt. The modern streets are all broad and rectangular.

"In the eyes of the French this arrangement is infinitely superior to the pretty Moorish houses of one story with a courtyard in the centre, planted with vines and oranges, round which run trellised galleries; superior also to the winding lanes lined with shops and cafés, shaded by trellis-work, above which shoot up graceful and delicate minarets into the azure sky. All these picturesque features have been ruthlessly destroyed, and rectangularism and Frenchified architecture reign in their stead."—*Scenes in the Sunny South.*

Fond as the French certainly are of destroying, they are, however, scarcely answerable for all the demolitions of this town, as is evidenced by the ruinous state of many even of the French buildings. The great, and indeed it would seem only, drawback to this spot is that it is so subject to earthquake.

Since the French occupation there has only been one

severe shock, but this ruined many of the recently erected houses, and from one cause or another, several of these have even up to the present time, not been restored, their shattered walls still remaining as somewhat melancholy reminders of what *may be.*

This last shock was so far back as the 2nd of January, 1867, and is described at some length by an English lady, who happened to have left Algiers for Blidah only the day before :—

"I was roused from sleep by a sound as of some one beating the floor above, and the walls on every side. It increased rapidly in violence, till the whole house shook and rocked and seemed giving way beneath our feet. I saw the wall in the corner of the room split open, and immediately afterwards masses of plaster fell from the ceiling and walls, bringing clouds of dust and a darkness as of night. An age of everlasting horror seemed to pass (in reality, I believe, scarcely thirty seconds), till I heard my husband's voice calling me to fly. I rushed blindly to the door and out into the corridor. All the inmates of the hotel were running wildly about. The women's screams and cries were what first made me actually afraid, and caused me to realise that all these terrible sights and sounds meant danger to life and limb. So little indeed did any of us know what our peril was, that we remained in the house more than a quarter of an hour after the first shock, the landlord assuring us all was over. A fresh, though slighter shock, however, now drove us from the house, where we had already tarried foolishly long, and the cry was, 'To the Place!'

"Thither we rushed in the pouring rain. It was a fearful scene; people came tearing down the neighbouring streets, women and children ran aimlessly hither and thither, shrieking wildly, men uttering hoarse sounds of terror, whilst the ground heaved and trembled beneath our feet, and we gazed at the surrounding houses in expectant horror. It seemed as if they must fall like a pack of cards. Another severer shock followed in about half-an-hour. The young trees rocked and swayed, the flagstaff waved backwards and forwards, the wind moaning, the rain pouring down, whilst above all rose, ever and anon, the sound of cavalry trumpets and the rolling of the drum calling on the troops to quit their tottering barracks. The Arabs alone stalked about unmoved, shrugging their shoulders and muttering, 'It is destiny.'

"Yet amid it all it was curious to notice how soon the mind grew accustomed to danger, how we calmly calculated whether we should be out of reach of the houses if they fell forwards into the 'Place;' how we carefully chose our position so as to be clear of the piece of water in the centre, in case of a sudden rush from the crowd; how we finally procured chairs to rest our wearied frames, as keeping closely together, our little band waited and watched for the worst. Overhead like a pall hung the leaden sky. Rain still fell heavily, as it had not ceased to do since midnight. Rain, long wished for, over the length and breadth of a thirsty land, came at last, like many an anxiously desired blessing, hand in hand with misfortune.

"As nothing fresh occurred, we finally determined to make our way down to the railroad, so as to be ready for the 12.30 train, that from Algiers having arrived safely and the line being declared uninjured. The guard afterwards told us he saw the rails some distance on in front heave up and down like an immense wave. In fear and trembling we passed under the tottering walls of the houses on our path, not daring to run, lest we should create a panic among the poor terror-stricken beings in the 'Place.' Arrived at the station, we sat in one of the carriages awaiting departure, and after experiencing one more slight shock, started for Algiers, which we reached in about a couple of hours, to find no damage suffered there, although considerable alarm. The hotel, our rooms, all, looked as on that peaceful New Year's morning, not thirty-six hours ago, when we set off in high spirits, full of pleasant anticipations. The events of the day seemed a hideous dream."—*Last Winter in Algeria. Mrs. Lloyd Evans.*

Alarms of this sort are decidedly the serpent which lurks in the Paradise of Blidah. But the shocks are so very rare that they need scarcely disturb the peace of the passing traveller. Even as a residence, the place is so attractive that, like the author of "Artists and Arabs," one might feel almost tempted "to chance it."

Blidah possesses no public buildings of any interest. It seems to consist chiefly of barracks, and is simply crowded with military, among whom the blue jackets of the Chasseurs d'Afrique predominate. There is always a very large cavalry force kept here, the stables of which are worth

seeing, as is also the stud of stallions (Dépôt de Remonte), among which are some very beautiful Arab and Syrian horses.

The Arab horse is extremely small and naturally fleshy, in colour most frequently white. It possesses a remarkably intelligent eye, extraordinary spirit and fleetness of foot, and seems fully aware of its own personal attractions, and the unshorn glory of its glossy flowing mane and tail. The French Government reserves to itself the right of buying from the Arabs, all the horses it may require at a certain fixed price—and that not a very high one.

The church of Blidah is a large stone building, standing in a small open square planted with trees and shrubs. During the celebration of mass here on Sunday morning, a military band stationed in the church, plays airs, which, to say the least of them, are inspiriting, while a guard of soldiers stands before the altar, and presents arms with a great clattering of steel on the stone pavement, at each elevation of the host. The practice, which is probably common in continental garrison-towns, has, to the uninitiated, a very peculiar effect. But the good Catholics of Blidah seem quite undisturbed at their devotions, either by the jarring shock of arms, or by the gay melodies of Mdme. Angot.

There is a hospital at Blidah, for both military and civilians, near the Porte d'Alger, outside which is the *Tapis vert*, or Tivoli, a kind of summer theatre, concert, and café, which is open most of the year, and where balls are sometimes given—by which it will be perceived that modern Blidah retains something of her anciently gay reputation.

But the glory of Blidah is her gardens. The orange-

groves, mutilated and destroyed as they have been in many cases, by the struggle of the French conquest, still form, not only her chief ornament, but her greatest source of wealth. They are said to cover two hundred and eighty acres. A French writer (M. Dalles) tells us that in the year 1874, five million four hundred thousand oranges were exported from the groves of Blidah to France, besides about an equal number sold for home consumption. Of the exports a very large proportion are mandarines. The export price is said to be about threepence a hundred; but the visitor to Blidah will be well content to ramble through the fragrant groves, and pluck the delicious golden fruit at two sous a dozen.

Until he have so plucked and eaten in the true garden of the Hesperides, let him not profess to know the taste of an orange, or imagine the hard-rinded, woolly and sour abomination, which so often sets his teeth on edge in his dear native land, has the remotest approach to the fragrant mellowness, which soothes the thirsty palate of an African epicure.

West of the town is the *Jardin public*—

"Although public gardens at Blidah are almost a superfluity, where the country around is a garden on a larger scale, where the very hedges are composed of pomegranate, orange and lemon bushes, mixed with double roses."—*Algeria as It Is.*

The Jardin public is however, very attractive. Though not covering a very large space of ground, it is extremely well laid out, and filled with beautiful tropical trees, shrubs and flowers. In the centre are a fountain and a basin of water, round which grow splendid arums.

Adjoining the garden, a short distance further to the right, is the celebrated *Bois-Sacré*, a grove of magnificent

olives, some of the trees having the girth of the finest old English oaks.

They are said to have been planted by the hand of the prophet, whose tomb is still to be seen, undisturbed alike by war and earthquake, beneath their sombre shade. There is something extremely solemn and impressive in this grand

The Bois-Sacré.

old grove—in the perpetual half-twilight of the silent spot—it seems the fitting resting-place of the mournful prophet of woe.

The koubba is the object of much veneration among the Moslems, and the goal of many pilgrimages—a fact which has not kept it sacred from the impertinent notchings of European tourists, or from the lively epigrams and political

squibs of French visitors, which are scrawled upon its time-honoured walls. It is some small consolation to our national sense of disgrace in this matter, to find that Englishmen are at least not the only, if the chief, "fools" whose names *se trouvent partout.*

One of the most interesting walks in the neighbourhood of Blidah, is to the valley of Oued-el-Kebir, and to the Fontaine-Fraîche. This is about two miles out of the town towards the head of the river, or rather stream, which supplies Blidah with its pure and abundant water, and forms one of its chief sources of healthfulness and fertility. The winter rains and mountain snows sometimes swell the stream into a torrent, but in its normal state it is of insignificant proportions.

At the head of the gorge—past a group of pretty French villas, are some Arab windmills and French breweries—beyond that again some irrigation-works.

It is when these are passed, that the walk becomes a really interesting one. The road then plunges into the ravine amid picturesque slopes, rocks fallen from the mountain, and rolled into all sorts of eccentric positions by the flooded river. The path follows the windings of the stream, which flows, now over a smooth and sandy bed, and now over pointed boulders, against which it frets and chafes in its impotence to hurl them out of its path. The mountains rise on each side, rocky and for the most part bare. Only here and there some ancient olive-tree, its roots half torn out of the ground by storm or flood, hangs its sombre foliage in banner-fashion over the road. Farther on, the gorge widens and divides itself into ravines, the funnel-shaped sides of which are covered with rich green vegetation—mimic forests of oak and olive.

Nearly two miles from the town, a small path leads up to the left, between giant hedges of lentisks, myrtles and pomegranates, into what appears to be a wood hanging on the slope of the mountain.

It is an Arab cemetery—but in truth, even on nearer approach, it seems little more than a wood. Under the shade of grand old olives, immense evergreen oaks, ghostly aspens, and sombre caroubas, lies a plot of ground thickly covered with long fine grass, and sown with wild flowers.

From the midst of all this mass of greenery, white tombs gleam out, sculptured turbans are discovered here and there half buried in verdure. Three or four only among the graves are distinguished by small white koubbas, some four or five feet high. These are the sepulchres of the Moslem saints, Sidi Mohammed Kebir and his sons.

Within them, in memory of the holy departed, burn small coloured candles or lamps, which are carefully tended by an old woman, who, in this wild and solitary spot, gives one the notion of being herself a spectre, watching among the tombs. But though entirely concealed from view by its impenetrable veil of foliage, a little village nestles on the hill just above the graveyard; and it will be a rare chance, if the stranger who rests awhile in the hill-side cemetery, does not presently hear the monotonous chant of Moslem prayer, rising into the clear still air, from the adjoining mosque, hidden away under its clump of wild orange-trees.

Not so very many years ago, the people of Blidah were careful not to venture up the valley of the Oued-el-Kebir, except in strong parties or well armed; but this state of things has happily passed away, and the villagers are eager

to welcome visitors into their bamboo-roofed cabins, and to offer their simple hospitalities.

Just above the village, on the right bank of the stream, is what is known as the Fontaine-Fraîche, a mountain spring of peculiar purity and sweetness, from which the town of Blidah is supplied with water. The source is covered by a particularly ugly brick building, which was erected in 1866. The water from the Fontaine-Fraîche is conveyed to the town in an underground aqueduct, which is said to pass twice beneath the bed of the river.

Above this spot the valley divides. To the right is a most picturesque road, practicable for horses or mules, which leads to the lonely village of Beni Salah, and further on again, up to the very cedars which clothe the higher slopes of the mountain. An excursion delightful to those who enjoy mountaineering, and presenting no difficulties beyond ordinary powers, is to the highest point of the range, upon the foot of which Blidah lies, and which is known as the *Piton* of the Beni Salah (5,379 feet).

Mules or horses should be taken (charge 5 fr., and a guide, 3 fr.).

It is not advisable to make this expedition without a guide, as the snow is very bewildering, and the path easily to be missed. Miss Crawford, in her "Travels through Algeria," gives a warning note on this point.

She and her party, finding that the road became steep for riding, and the horses embarrassed by the branches that hung across the path, dismounted, and, leaving the guide and horses together, proceeded to explore the upper ridge of the mountain on foot. But after wandering awhile among the cedars, and admiring the scene of gloomy

grandeur, when they attempted to retrace their steps, she relates—

"We were most unpleasantly startled to find that the path by which we had ascended, seemed to have utterly vanished. The snow lay untrodden before our view, and not a sign of guide or horses was visible. The disagreeable truth that we had lost our way, became too clear."—*Through Algeria.*

After wandering up and down the snowy ravines for some considerable time, seeing the sun go down, and making up their minds to a night's lodging in the open, they were rescued from their disagreeable plight. On regaining their horses and somewhat inefficient guide—an Arab boy—they found him in tears, though, after the Arab fashion, resigned to fate.

He was quite convinced that the travellers had perished, and only dreaded to return home, "as the people of Blidah would certainly cut his head off for losing an English party."

So Miss Crawford tells the tale for the warning of future explorers of the Beni Salah. The farm of *La Glacière* is reached in two hours and a half.

This is an ice-house and not a glacier, and it was to a vain search after a supposed glacier, caused by a misapprehension of terms, that the author of "Through Algeria" owed her adventure.

The Glacière is owned by M. Laval, proprietor of the café on the Place d'Armes at Blidah. He has a large grant of land on the mountain, which he is converting into a prosperous farm, with considerable plantations of chestnuts and other trees, but he is principally occupied in storing ice for summer use.

From the farm to the "Two Cedars," another two hours must be allowed, the descent being of course much more rapid. Lunch should be taken, although the hospitality of the Glacière-Laval is proverbial. The larger of the two cedars, which form so conspicuous a landmark, measures seven feet in girth. On the highest point is a cairn, commemorative of the exploits of various travellers; this is rather farther to the westward than the cedars. The view from thence is very fine and extensive, and the whole scene one of impressive gloomy grandeur. While the sun is up the air, even among the snow, will not be found cold.

"Quite at the summit, among the cedars, on the last sugar-loaf ridge of the mountain, is still to be found an old koubba, now barricaded with brambles, and altogether abandoned, but not absolutely in ruins. The plateau is not more than a hundred paces in extent. It is surrounded by cedars and paved with living rocks, so white and flat, so washed by violent rains, so devoured by burning suns, that they have almost the appearance of bones, bleached by long exposure in the open air. A coarse short grass, with clumps of grey lichen and scraps of thorny moss, a kind of metallic vegetation—the only life possible on this stony soil and in the inclemency of this elevation—clothes the rocks with a scanty verdure. The cedars are low, but very large; their foliage is almost black, their trunks the colour of rusty iron. Wind, snow, rain and sun, each fiercer here than in the plain, in turn assail them; the lightning from time to time strikes them and cuts them in two, as by an invisible hatchet; all the changes of an extreme climate deal them mortal blows, which yet do not kill them. Their bark peels off in scales, and is spread in dust around their trunks. Passers-by make incisions in them, shepherds hack at them, wood-cutters make faggots of them; they come to an end little by little—but with the tenacity of living things; their roots have the solidity of the rock which supports them, and the sap, which seems to shun the stern necessity of death, takes refuge in the branches, which are constantly green and fruitful.

"We sat at the feet of these venerable trees, ancient counsellors as they might be called. The day was warm and utterly calm—a circumstance which I do not forget, for I owe to it, the strongest impression of solemn peace which I ever felt in my life. The silence was so intense,

that we remarked even the noise of our own voices, and spoke involuntarily in a half whisper.

"From the spot of which I speak, at the foot of the old koubba, the horizon describes a perfect circle, except at one point, where the dark cone of the Mouzaïa shoots upwards. To the north we look over the plain, its villages but indistinctly marked, its routes traced in white lines; then over the rolling Sahel, from Algiers, the exact place of which is indicated by a white speck, to Chenoua, whose foot is seen advancing like a promontory between two gulfs; beyond—between the coast of Africa and the infinite heavens, the sea lies extended as far as eye can reach, a desert of blue. Eastward is the white Djurdjura; on the opposite side rises the dark mass of Ouarensensis. Eighty leagues of sky without cloud or spot separate these two landmarks, showing the two extremities of the Kabyle country. At our feet extend fifteen leagues of mountains in an indescribable variety of forms, piled one upon the other, entangled and lost in a network of bluest haze. Medeah should be visible, were it not masked by the Nador, and lost in the turn of a ravine which is itself an elevated plateau.

"Straight southwards, beyond this vague outline of mountains, valleys, and peaks—that vast mountainous country which is called the Tell and the Atlas—are to be discerned yet finer, suppler lines, extended like a blue network between high supports, that farthest to the right, bearing the citadel of Boghar. Further on again we catch the low line of the plains. . . . The half of French Africa is spread out in our sight: Eastern and Western Kabylia, the hills of Algiers, the plain, and, in the opposite direction to the sea, the Sahara."—*Une Année dans le Sahel. Fromentin.*

Les Gorges de la Chiffa, the most beautiful of the excursions from Blidah, may either be made a separate expedition (carriage from Blidah 15 fr.), or it may be taken, indeed must be passed, *en route* to Medeah (see next chapter).

CHAPTER XXIV.

LES GORGES DE LA CHIFFA.—MEDEAH.—BOKHARI.—BOGHAR.

"Hills peep o'er hills, and Alps on Alps arise."
Pope.

Diligences run through the whole of this route from Blidah as far as El-Aghouat on the borders of the desert.

To Medeah in about four hours, fare (coupé) 5 fr., twice a day, morning and afternoon.

From Medeah to Bokhari nine or ten hours. Every morning at 5 A.M., 10 fr.

From Bokhari to El-Aghouat, three days' journey of about seventeen hours each, 70 fr.

There can be no doubt that for these, as indeed for all the excursions to be made from Blidah, a private carriage is not only pleasanter, but for a party of four or even three people, less expensive. A carriage with three horses can be hired at Blidah for El-Aghouat and back, for from 400 to 500 fr., or at a uniform rate of 25 fr. a day, driver and all expenses included. Carriages are supposed to be hired somewhat more reasonably at Blidah than at Algiers.

It need scarcely be said that a journey on horseback presents many advantages and attractions, and is decidedly the method of travelling by which the country is seen to the greatest advantage.

The tariff for a carriage and pair to the Gorges de la Chiffa from Blidah and back, is 12 fr. as far as the Ruisseau des Singes, and 15 fr. to the Camp des Chênes, the end of the Gorge.

ON leaving Blidah by the gate Bab-es-Sebt, the road turns sharply westward, coasting the foot of the mountains, and running parallel with the railway through a richly productive and well-cultivated country, or rather orchard,

for about four miles, when, the little Oued-el-Kebir having been crossed, the new and handsome iron bridge will be reached which spans the Chiffa.

The bridge, with its extensive range of high arches, seems altogether out of proportion to the tiny streamlet, which in ordinary times, trickles feebly among the stones far below, leaving a wide belt of flinty shore, over which laurel-bushes grow here and there, with ragged banks of red earth flaming in the sun, high and dry. But in autumn, and sometimes in spring, when the mountain-snows melt suddenly, the tiny streamlet swells into a vast and raging wave, which tears away banks, boulders, and trees in its rushing fury—too often flocks, herds, and houses as well. For a few hours it sweeps on, in a tempest of passion; then, as suddenly exhausted as aroused, sinks down again into its accustomed calm, leaving its wide course naked and sterile, as it was the moment before the sudden outbreak of the waters, and as it will be for at least another six months.

On the right is the small village of La Chiffa. The diligences for Medeah meet the 6 A.M. and the mid-day trains from Algiers, at this station. The village was almost destroyed in 1867, by the earthquake which was so severely felt at Blidah, but it has been rebuilt and is now thriving.

At this point the road divides; that to Milianah and Cherchel continuing through the plain, that to Medeah turning to the left.

Just past La Chiffa is a large military convict prison, surrounded by a palisade. The convicts may be seen at work in the surrounding fields under a guard armed with muskets; but their principal employment here, as at another station near El-Affroun, is in splitting the fibre of

the palmetto-leaves, some portions of which are made into ropes, while others are set aside for the manufacture of baskets, mats, and paper.

The road now begins to ascend, following the right bank of the Chiffa, and very soon the entrance to the gorge is seen, the two sides of the mountain slanting down like the sides of the letter V.

The gorge, which passes completely through the lesser Atlas, is about ten miles in length, and is of remarkable beauty. It scarcely possesses the grandeur and sublimity of an Alpine pass; it may be more fitly compared with that of the Pyrenees, or with some of our grander Scotch or Welsh scenery—though the beauty of the African climate gives it a charm of luxuriance, a richness of vegetation and colouring, which are quite wanting among our northern hills, or, indeed, among the sombre pines which clothe the Alpine slopes.

At the bottom of the gorge, flows the Chiffa, in a bed of oleanders, which, when in flower, must form a beautiful mass of colour. On the left rises the dark mass of the Djebel Nadar; on the right that of the Djebel Mouzaïa, 5,350 feet, crowned with limitless forests of chestnut and ilex.

The sides of the ravine are clothed with a luxuriant foliage of evergreen oak, cork, and carouba trees, intermingled with wild olives, almonds, arbutus, myrtle, and a variety of evergreen shrubs. The lower slopes are hung with a thick fringe of delicate maiden-hair fern, and are gay in their season with a variety of brilliant wild-flowers. Here may be found the yellow jasmine, the delicate mimosa, the caper-plant with its curious blossoms, together

with tufts of wild lavender and broom, and heaths of every shade.

The road itself is a splendid piece of engineering, being

Gorges de la Chiffa.

cut out of the solid rock, sometimes carried by masonry over chasms hundreds of feet deep, crossing and recrossing

the stream, and at times overhanging the abyss like a cornice. It was only completed in the year 1855, before which time there was no other means of communication between Blidah and Medeah, than by the roundabout route of Milianah, a bridle-path over the mountains. In the early days of this road, the pass was protected by small detachments of soldiers, posted along its course in camps of six tents each. But the wild Arab tribes were not the only enemies against whom the soldier-engineers had to contend while the pass was making; for it is said, that the monkeys, with which the gorge was at this time infested, resented the invasion of their domains, by rolling down stones from the mountain on the soldiers, as they were at work in the ravine below.

Considerable difficulties attended the construction of the Chiffa road, on account of the yielding nature of the rock, which was continually being washed down by the rains in huge masses into the valley. One spot in the gorge, known as the *Roche-pourrie*, or Rotten Mountain, was the object of much anxiety to the engineers; but, happily, when the road was making, a flood occurred, which hurled down the greater portion of the decomposed rock, the débris being blasted away with charges of gunpowder, which dislodged no less than one hundred thousand cubic yards of earth and stone at one explosion.

But even now the diligences are often stopped at this particular point; and travellers have to pick their way, among fallen blocks of stone and trickling water-courses, to another conveyance sent to meet them from the opposite end of the ravine.

About two miles and a half from the entrance of the

gorge, is a kind of opening in the side of the pass, formed by the sweeping lines of a high mountain, striking at right angles with the gorge. Down the cleft rushes a clear, bright stream, leaping from boulder to boulder, known as the Ruisseau des Singes; and in a little nook beside it, nestles a small cottage shaded by gigantic fig-trees, which was originally the settlement of a Swiss colonist, but is now an inn, where a very fair luncheon may be obtained—but a bargain as to price should be made.

The fish of the Chiffa are considered a delicacy.

Behind the inn, a steep winding path leads beside the stream, through a wilderness of flowers and shrubs to the head of the small ravine. The steep sides of the cleft were originally cultivated and reclaimed from the mountain, by the enterprising Swiss colonist, plantations of coffee, cinchona, and other exotic plants having been attempted. But the plantations and gardens proved a financial failure, owing chiefly, it is said, to the depredations of the monkeys. Figs, fruits of all kinds, lettuces and cabbages, vegetables of every description, were carried away wholesale by these unscrupulous robbers, who scoured the country in numerous bands.

At the present day the garden is a tangled mass of luxuriant vegetation, and the monkeys being acknowledged masters of the situation, make amends for their past bad conduct by attracting visitors to the little auberge. Troops of these creatures may constantly be seen, chattering and gamboling among the trees which clothe the sides of the gorge; but they are in their nature tricksome, and too often the expectant traveller, has to content himself with the counterfeit presentment of the tailed tribe, which some

weather-bound artist has amused himself by sketching on the wall of the little inn.

It is evident that the monkeys of the Ruisseau would not condescend to sit to him for their portraits, for he has been more bountiful to them than Nature. He has given them tails, and the monkeys of the Chiffa, like those of the rock of Gibraltar, are destitute of these appendages.

A few hundred yards lower down the road, in the face of the cliff which supports it, is a beautiful stalactite cave, the key of which is to be obtained at the auberge of the Ruisseau.

"It is," says Colonel Walmsley, "of great extent, and reminded me much, of some of the Derbyshire mines." This traveller, who visited the cavern in 1858, gives a thrilling description of two hours passed in its recesses in complete darkness, he having ventured in alone and his lantern becoming extinguished, he was unable to find his way out. The continual drippings from the roof make the floor of the cavern extremely wet and slippery, and here and there form into pools, which the explorer would do well to avoid!

Beyond the Ruisseau des Singes, the gorge closes in, and the scenery becomes altogether wilder and more romantic, assuming something of an Alpine character.

The ravine winds between enormous precipices, the tops of which are veiled in mist. Constantly the traveller seems advancing to a spot, where the road must certainly end, or tunnel through the mountains. Then suddenly it turns, disclosing another hundred yards where progress seems possible, but again without apparent outlet, except by the bed of the brawling Chiffa below.

This stream has, according to Arab legend, a romantic origin.

The mountains and plain had been, says the legend, from time immemorial inhabited by tribes of fierce and quarrelsome character. A feud had existed between them for so many generations, that not one of their warriors "had hair between the nose and the chin."

But one day a holy marabout, by name Sidi Mohammed Bou-Chakour, or the man with the hatchet, came striding over the mountains hatchet in hand, and by some supernatural agency, caused the inimical tribes to be brought face to face. Either the divine power of the saint, or, possibly, better acquaintance, put an end to the long-standing feud.

To reward the Mouzaïans of the plain for the concessions they had made in the cause of peace, Sidi Mohammed clave the mountains asunder with his hatchet, and instantly the fertilising river flowed through the defile. It was called the Chiffa—the water of healing. The Mouzaïans of the hills then petitioned for their share of the good things, and were bidden to carry a pitcher of water every morning to the highest point of the mountain, where the hermit dwelt. This he poured down the mountain-side, the scanty contents of the water-pot multiplying themselves into a thousand trickling rills.

Above that portion of the gorge which is known as *Les Cascades*, the koubba of the man of peace may still be seen. Here, prayers are offered in time of drought for rain, and at such times it will be found surrounded by a crowd of classical amphoræ.

The Mouzaïans do not seem in later times to have lost

their ancient character for fierceness and valour. They played an important rôle in resisting the French invaders, and were to the mountains what the Hadjoutes were in the plain—a name round which the insurgent population grouped itself.

The combat of the Col de Mouzaïa was one of the fiercest and most desperate struggles which the French had in their conquest of Algeria.

The women of this tribe are renowned for their beauty, and the marabouts for their learning.

On, through the grand solitude of the mountain ravine, the intense silence broken only by the sound of the horses' feet that convey the passing traveller, the gurgling of the streamlets, and the occasional chattering of the monkey-inhabitants among the branches of the high trees.

These seem to be, now, the only occupants of these mountain solitudes, though it was not so very long ago that lions made their way through the pathless ravine, to ravage the plain of the Metidja, and the author of "Algeria as It Is" recalls the fact, that the royal beast was here seen so late as the year 1874.

At the present day, however, little fear or hope of so exciting an encounter need be entertained. Wild beasts in Algeria are becoming every day more truly *rara avis*. It is not unusual, however, even yet, to see a grand golden eagle hovering over the gorge, while rock-swallows skim here and there, and kites, ravens, falcons, and buzzards make their homes in the rocky sides of the cliffs.

Not a human habitation is to be seen. Such Arab *gourbis* as there may be, are hidden well away from the prying eyes which may possibly pass along the road. For

"the Arab," as Fromentin truly says, "does not care to show his dwelling any more than he cares to tell his name, to speak of his affairs, to mention the object of his comings and goings."

Only very rarely is to be seen on the high-road an Arab train of mules or donkeys, laden with merchandise, and bestrode in side-saddle fashion by tall Arabs, whose feet almost touch the ground as they hang from their diminutive steeds. As a rule the Arab prefers the mountain bridle-path which his fathers used, to these works of modern engineering; but when such a laden train of asses is met, winding its way through the defile, it detracts little from the savage picturesqueness of the scene; and if the camel take the place of the ass, making its slow way, turning, as it goes, its patient head from side to side, while its long-limbed Arab master stalks majestically at its head, the harmony of the picture is all the greater.

Rather more than six miles from the entrance of the gorge is the Camp des Chênes, where it virtually ends.

This is an open semicircular space once used as a camp, and where there is now a small inn known as the Hôtel des Voyageurs, recommended by several travellers as a halting-place in preference to the inn of the Ruisseau. When a drive is taken from Blidah to the Gorges, this is the end of the "course."

Just beyond are some gold mines, till lately worked by an English company, but now abandoned.

Three miles farther the road to *Mouzaïa les Mines* turns off. This village is best visited from Medeah.

A continuous ascent, during the latter part of which the

road winds in zigzag fashion up the mountain, leads to Medeah, not a sight of that town being obtained—owing to its position on the southern slope of the Nador—until its gates are actually entered; but the view backwards is very beautiful, extending right across the plain, which, from some peculiarity in the atmosphere, has always the appearance of a huge lake when seen from afar. The whole coast-line from Algiers to Cherchel is distinctly visible, the dark mass of the Tombeau de la Chrétienne rises grandly on the horizon, and the minarets of Koleah stand out in gleaming whiteness, at night, as one traveller observes, having the appearance of a lighthouse across the sea.

MEDEAH.—Hôtel de la Régence; very clean and comfortable. Excellent cooking; dinner 3 fr. Hôtel d'Orient.

These hotels, like the inns of Blidah, are built round courtyards; the rooms are floored with brick, and are scarcely adapted for cold weather. Indeed, it will be well for travellers who fear the cold, not to make an expedition to Medeah too early in the year, as they will find there a completely different climate from that of Algiers or even of Blidah. The town is 3,018 feet above the sea, is surrounded with mountains which are snow-covered for several months in the year, and is altogether not a winter resort for delicate persons; but in the spring, as an escape from the heat of Algiers, it will be found extremely healthful and pleasant. The vegetation has more of an European than an African character, all kinds of fruit-trees, apples, pears, and plums flourishing well—the vine best of all; and some of the wine which is made here is much esteemed.

Medeah is well supplied with all the necessaries of life;

and living is cheap. The Arabs have a saying, "If poverty enters Medeah at dawn it always leaves before sunset."

They tell also the following legend:—

"The Spirit of Evil roaming about for victims once entered Medeah. Passing up the streets, the Evil Eye saw abundance on every side, and turning into the market, the great quantity of provisions and produce of the soil which were displayed there, made the bad spirit despair of causing mischief where food was so plentiful. Advancing further, only a doctor and an advocate could be found who were dissatisfied, for the one had no patients, and the other no clients. So the evil genius left Medeah in disgust, quitting the town by the gate opposite to the one by which he had entered, to seek in large cities, amongst the poor and needy, the poverty and discontent which lead to crime."—*Algeria as It Is.*

Medeah was an ancient Roman station, being *medix*, or *ad medias*, between two Roman cities, scarcely any remains of which now exist, Berouaguïa and Amoura. Various medals and Roman remains have been found in digging the foundations of the houses, and one part of the ramparts (N.W. of the town) is decided to be ancient. Medeah reappeared in the tenth century as Lemdia, a Berber city, and subsequently, when Algiers submitted to Turkish rule, became the chief town of the Beylik of Tittery.

"Every schoolboy" is supposed to know the line of Virgil—

"Tityre, tu patulæ recubans sub tegmine fagi."

At the time of the French conquest of Algiers, the Bey of Tittery sent in his allegiance, but shortly revolting, General Clauzel, in November, 1830, marched with seven thousand men to Medeah, by the Col de Mouzaïa, to dethrone the old Bey, and instal one of his own choosing,

Bey Omar, who was left with a garrison of twelve hundred men. This small force finding itself unable to retain its position, returned to Algiers the following January. In 1836 another Bey was established here by French authority, furnished with six hundred guns, fifty thousand cartridges, and six thousand francs in money. But a month afterwards, stores, money, and Bey, were taken possession of by El Berkani Khalif of Abd-el-Kader.

For awhile the Emir made Medeah his capital, and it was here that the Holy War was declared by him, and the oath sworn of eternal fidelity to the cause of patriotism (page 144) in 1840.

Later on, in 1840, after the famous combat of the Col de Mouzaïa, Medeah was entered by the Duc d'Aumale, Abd-el-Kader having abandoned it.

Since that time it has been definitely occupied by the French, although the difficulties of revictualling the isolated garrison were at first very great. It is now a completely French town, with broad, clean, but altogether modern streets.

"At Medeah we find everything much the same as at Blidah—a little rougher and poorer, perhaps, but the same mixture of French and Moorish buildings: fine old mosques, courtyards after the style of the Alhambra, and carved doorways of very early date; but brick fortifications, young French soldiers, estaminets, and a 'Place' with half-dead trees, are more prominent features. And here, at a height of three thousand feet above the sea, set deep in the heart of the Atlas, civilization may again be seen doing its work—the Arabs indulging in absinthe freely, and playing at cards with their conquerors."—*Artists and Arabs.*

Medeah was, in old times, the great mart for negro slaves from the South—so that in those days, at least, one would have thought the Evil One might have found enough of misery in the place, to satisfy even him! It has now a

considerable trade in grain, beasts, and wool, an important market being held on Fridays.

The principal mosque in the town is now used as a church, and the old palace is the residence of the commandant, many storks building their nests in the roof.

The barracks are very extensive—a magnificent view is obtained from them. Here also are the head-quarters of the spahis, the native horse, whose rich and striking costume relieves the monotony of the dull French streets. This force is very nearly akin to our Indian irregular cavalry. The horses, some of which are very beautiful, are the private property of the soldiers, and many natives of birth and position are to be found in the ranks. The saddles and trappings are of the old Arab style, often highly ornamented and enriched with bullion. Every now and then reviews of the spahis and *goum* (the reserve) are held at Medeah, and the spectacle is said to be, and doubtless is, a particularly wild and striking one.

The women of Medeah, like those of Blidah, leave only one eye exposed, a fashion which is known by the name of *ennekabo*—

> "Who, if between the folds but *one* eye shone,
> Like Seba's queen could vanquish with that one."

Medeah is well supplied with water from an old Roman aqueduct; and another aqueduct consisting of two tiers of arches, of which the lower are partly filled up, is to be seen east of the tower.

EXCURSIONS FROM MEDEAH.—A pleasant walk to the *Pic du Dakla*, and a glorious view to be obtained from it.

To *Mouzaïa les Mines*, by *Lodi*, a village of vineyards and olives. Mouzaïa, the Velesci of the Romans, is situated in a steep gorge of the Atlas, overlooking the pass, which was the scene of the sanguinary struggle between the troops of Abd-el-Kader and the French. The mines, which are copper, are advantageously worked, but the ore, owing to the scarcity of fuel, is not smelted on the spot, but is sent chiefly to Swansea. Traces have been found both of silver, tin, and lead. About a mile from the village is a mineral spring, to which a path leads from the little auberge. This spring, the valuable qualities of which were only discovered about the year 1857 by M. Pouzols, the engineer of the mine, is said to be highly effective in cases of fever. It is strongly alkaline and gaseous, resembling the Seltzer and St. Galmier waters. Near the summit of the famous Col, in a wood of oaks, olives, lentisks, and tamarinds, is a deep mountain tarn abounding in leeches, and the favourite resort of widgeon, teal, and wild-duck. Further down are some gypsum quarries.

The road from Medeah southwards, after passing the village of Damietta, winds for some distance among bleak and sterile mountains, affording every now and then charming peeps into fertile and well-cultivated valleys, but which are apparently destitute of inhabitants.

"The mountain ranges to the south were like an undulating sea, divided from us by lesser hills and little plains, with here and there valleys green and cultivated; but the prevailing character of the scenery was rocky and barren. The great beauty was in the clouds that passed over at intervals, spreading a grateful shade, and casting wonderful shadows on the rocks. The rain would fall heavily through them, sometimes for three or four minutes, like summer showers, and the little dried-up torrent-beds would trickle for awhile; the Arabs

would collect a few drops and then all would be gone—the clouds, the rivulets, and every sign of moisture on the ground; and the mountains would stand out sharp and clear against the sky, with that curious pinky hue, so well portrayed in the background of Lewis's picture of 'A Camp on Mount Sinai.'"—*Artists and Arabs.*

In the first years of their occupation, the French erected a line of semaphore stations between Medeah and Bokhari. These are now disused, being supplanted by telegraphic wires, which cross the valleys from point to point, hanging down occasionally so as almost to describe a semicircle. Twelve miles from Medeah, is reached the old semaphore station of Ben Chikoo. This is the highest point of the road between Medeah and Bokhari—5,007 feet above the sea. Here, where there is a good inn and caravansary, the diligence stops for breakfast on its return journey.

The road now begins to descend the southern slopes of the mountains, which are clothed with fine woods of oak and cork, and soon the valley of Berouaguïa, so called from the *berouack*, or jonquil, which grows there in masses, is entered. It is a rapid change from wild and rugged mountain scenery to peaceful pastorals. In the centre of the valley are the little village and fort of Berouaguïa, a station of spahis, built on the site of an old Roman town, and with its very stones. There is a fine fountain here with a ferruginous spring, and an Arab market is held on Mondays, but it is a wonderfuly isolated place; and we are not surprised to read in Canon Tristram's book, of the lonely captain of spahis, amusing himself by the training and petting of a *tame wild-boar!*

Near the road, on the left, will be seen the ruins of the Roman station of Tanaramusa Castra, named in the Itinerary of Antoninus,

Past Berouaguïa the valley is the habitat of the warlike tribe of Chorfa, who have, to their great disgust, been united by French administration, with another tribe tainted with negro blood—the Abid. The Chorfa are extremely proud of their descent from the Moorish princes, and delight in relating the achievements of one of their ancestors, a holy marabout, who was accustomed to go to battle, armed only with his chaplet; but, as he slipped the beads through his venerable fingers, at every bead an enemy fell dead.

The marvellous chaplet is still preserved in the koubba of the saint, some four miles from the village.

The road ascends a range of hills which separates the valley of Berouaguïa from that of the Chelif, and descends again in a series of rapid curves. On the intervening ridge is the inn of Aïn-Maklouf, where the diligence waits for the mid-day *déjeuner*. The food is good, and lodging may also be had. This place is somewhat more than half-way between Medeah and Bokhari.

The scenery, as the road descends into the Chelif valley, is most beautiful. The mountain slopes are covered with trees—the elevations distinctly marked by the varying belts of vegetation—pines, junipers, tuyah, and cork; the spaces between the trees gay with a variety of wild-flowers; the valleys rich in pasture and well-cultivated crops. The sylvan beauty of the district and the rich vegetation, the clumps of trees which are frequent in the landscape, the absence of fences, recall, says Canon Tristram, the scenery of a park. Only the trace of human habitation is wanting to complete the illusion. The sole feature in the landscape which speaks of human life or human wants, is the wells, which glistening white here and there under the shade of

their white poplars and aspens, add not a little to the beauty of the scene.

As the road passes through the valley of El-Hakoum, the ground carpeted with scented wild-flowers of every hue, the little town of Bokhari is seen in the distance, perched on the summit of almost the highest mountain in the neighbourhood—a white spot on a green background. To the eastward the limestone rocks present the appearance of fortifications.

Bokhari is situated on the right bank of the Chelif, the most considerable river of Northern Africa west of the Nile, known to the ancients as the Cenalaph. Rising in the desert, it turns westward near Bokhari, and flows in a line to which the railway has been made almost parallel, until it suddenly turns towards the sea, which it enters near Mostaganem, in the province of Oran. It is, at Bokhari, a tortuous stream winding through a rocky valley in a deep sandy bed.

BOKHARI (Hôtel des Messageries, good) is situated on a wooded mountain 4,200 feet above the sea. It is a most important military position, and has been so esteemed from the time of the Romans, commanding as it does the northern part of the Sahara, and affording a look-out on the wild nomad tribes. It is known as the "Balcony of the South." The town itself is somewhat bleak, commonplace and uninteresting, but the view across the valley to the opposite craggy heights of Boghar is very fine.

Boghar, which looks across at Bokhari over the Chelif valley, is thoroughly Arab, and a great mart for burnous and other articles of native manufacture. Here was Abd-el-Kader's castle, of which we hear so much in the interesting account Lieutenant Lamping gives of his experiences in the

Foreign Legion, translated by Lady Duff Gordon ("The French in Algiers"). Abd-el-Kader fired and abandoned it before the arrival of the French troops. The fort has been rebuilt, and dominates the village. Under the cliff are some beautifully cultivated gardens, watered by numerous little streamlets; but the general appearance of the rock on which Boghar perches is arid and sun-dried.

The artist, M. Fromentin, writes—

"I did not go to Bokhari; it seemed to me dull, cold, curious perhaps, but *ennuyeux*. As for Boghar, it is the true land of Ham. It is strikingly quaint. I know nothing like it in matter of colouring. I could never have imagined anything so—must I say *yellow?* The word does not in the least convey the idea of the thing. It robs it of all fineness of tone. To express the action of the sun on this burning soil, by saying that it is yellow, makes it at once ugly—vulgarizes it. Let us then say nothing as to its colour, but declare only that it is beautiful.

"The village, on this background, is white, streaked with brown and lilac, overlooking a little ravine; it might be cut from a block of porphyry or agate, so richly is it veined with colour from delicate lilac to blood-red. Here, by a kind of miracle, two or three green fig-trees, and as many lentisks, are growing. Besides these, there is nothing around Boghar that resembles a tree or even grass—the soil is sandy and as bare as a cinder."—*Un Été dans le Sahara.*

Even more exciting and interesting to the traveller will be the view which the "Balcony of the South," for the first time gives him, of that vast mysterious region which he has known and pictured to his mind's eye from a child upwards—the Great Sahara.

But, like everything else which we so dream of, it is utterly unlike that picture; and, at the first sight, it must be confessed, it is disappointing. We want the limitless stretch of yellow sand, with perhaps, the dying camel in the midst, to which our ideas have so long been assimilating the notion of the Great Sahara. We look in vain for the spotted

leopard-skin—for the distant waving palm-trees, for the sandy whirlwind. We look out; we gaze with a wondering bewilderment over a green and brown billowy expanse stretching away into purple distances; we strain our eyes upon a horizon where sky and mountain meet in an infinity of blue. We are told that this is our long-dreamed-of Sahara, and we feel that life has lost an illusion the more; we discover, though perhaps not for the first time, that realities are but snares to lure us to disappointment; and yet, in spite of ourselves, we gaze and gaze upon the scene before us, and the longer we gaze the more we find to attract and to repel us—to inspire us at once with a notion of mysterious illimitable space, and barren desolation.

By-and-by we grow into content with the Sahara as it is, instead of that which we have imagined it to be.

There is a bridle-road, one day's journey over the mountains, from Bokhari to Teniet-el-Had.

CHAPTER XXV.

ON THE WAY TO THE DESERT.—BOKHARI TO EL-AGHOUAT.

> "'Mid far sands
> The palm-tree-cinctured city stands,
> Bright white beneath, as heaven-bright blue
> Above it."

THE journey from Algiers south, as far as Bokhari, presents no difficulties, and is not fatiguing. Beyond this point, however, it is scarcely advisable for travellers to pass, who are not disposed in a measure to rough it.

From Bokhari to El-Aghouat diligences run, the journey occupying three long days. The diligences are anything but good, being in fact only char-à-bancs, open at the sides, with curtains as their sole protection; and the only accommodation to be found on the route is in caravansaries bare of every comfort, and where food is sometimes scarce. "These are," says Murray, "managed for the most part by obliging people, and the beds are clean. Charges fixed. Bed, 2 fr.; déjeuner, 3 fr.; dinner, 3 to 4 fr." Plenty of wraps should be taken, as the weather is sometimes very cold on the steppes of the Sahara, even late on into the spring.

From Bokhari the Sahara may be said to begin, the

Sahara being understood to be by no means a mere desert, but as the general name of a great country composed of plains and hills, with intervening tracts of sand, more or less inhabited by two races—those who have fixed habitations in towns, and those who wander from place to place, and who every year, when they have laid in their provisions of grain from the Tell, emigrate with thousands of camels and all their belongings into the southern tracts.

The old popular notion which associated the Great Sahara with an enormous moving sand-ocean is by no means carried out by facts, or by the reports of those travellers who have penetrated into even some of its wildest regions. The most interesting account that we possess of Saharan travel, and the only one likely to serve as a guide-book to those who wish to make excursions to some of the remote oases, is the "Great Sahara" of Canon Tristram, written in 1860, since which time, however, various routes have been opened out by the French.

These desert journeys are even yet attended with considerable risk and difficulty, and will scarcely be within the programme of ordinary travellers. But to El-Aghouat, the route presents neither difficulty nor danger, and discomforts are the greatest drawbacks to which the traveller will be likely to be exposed. The distance is one hundred and ninety miles due south from Bokhari.

Soon after leaving this town, which from its southern side is said to resemble the hill-cities of Judea, a very desolate region is entered—the valley of the Chelif.

"Imagine a country of stone, beaten by hot winds, and baked to its very entrails, with marbly earth polished like pottery, and so bare of vegetation that it might have been subjected to the action of fire:

horizontal bare hills cut into fantastic serrated shapes, narrow valleys as bare and clean as a barn-floor, the only vegetation a few dust-laden oleanders burnt up by the fierce sun, and all this as far as the eye can reach, neither red, yellow, nor brown, but exactly the colour of the lion's skin!"—*Un Été dans le Sahara.*

Passing through this rocky region, which is supposed to represent the coast-line at the time when the Sahara was covered by the sea, and which is marked by water-worn caverns, the road emerges by a narrow defile on the first great plain of the south, affording pasturage for an immense number of flocks and herds of camels, the latter seen always feeding one behind the other in curious long lines. The black tents of the herdsmen alone break the monotony of the plain, which extends for a distance of some seventy miles due south, bounded in the dim blue horizon by the mountains of the Seven Sisters, the Djebel Sahari.

Aïn-Ousera is the place where the diligence stops for breakfast. Here are a very clean and good caravansary and a well, on the border of what was once a salt-marsh, but which has now been drained.

"This first aspect of the desert made me sad. It was not the impression of a fine country struck by death and condemned to sterility; it was not like the skeleton of Boghar, strange but striking. It was the oppression of a great space without form, almost without colour—it was emptiness, nothingness, a thing forgotten of God. Sadness and sameness, greyness and indecision of outline, these were its characteristics. Night when it fell added nothing to the inexpressible desolation of the place."—*Un Été dans le Sahara.*

The only vegetation, and that extending, it would seem, into almost illimitable space, is the yellowing dried-up green of the alfa—the desert grass. This plant, which had long been considered an almost hopeless weed, has within the last few years, been discovered to be one of the most

valuable productions of Algeria. To quote a recent article in *Fraser*—

"The history of the alfa-grass is a tale of marvels from beginning to end.

"Between the Tell, in other words between the cultivated coast region, and the Sahara, lie vast plateaux covered with waving grass, hundreds of thousands of acres, unsusceptible of cultivation, and offering but scant herbage to the flocks of the Bedouin. Nothing is more imposing and picturesque than these interminable billowy wastes of brown and gold, no break in the wide lines on either side, no cloud in the sultry amber sky, no living thing in sight except a white-robed shepherd keeping his sheep. . . .

"The tall reedy grass, lending the otherwise arid plains the glow of mellow cornfields, is the *Stipa tenacissima* familiar to botanists, and the *alfa* of commerce.

"The blades, between two and three feet high, are brown and wiry, and exceedingly tenacious in texture. A more unpromising-looking natural specimen it would be difficult to name, yet this ill-favoured plant has already made the fortune of speculators, and is tending in no small degree to aid the progress of Algerian colonisation. It may indeed be regarded as an inexhaustible source of wealth, seeing that millions of acres are covered with it, that it requires no cultivation, and that as soon as one crop is cut, another begins to grow.

"A few years since this desert grass was regarded as an obstacle to progress, but the happy notion occurred to some inventive mind that paper might be made of it; and so well did the experiment answer, and so rapidly did the invention spread, that enormous quantities are now exported to England and other countries. Many of our leading newspapers are printed on paper thus manufactured, the proprietors of *Lloyd's Weekly News*, I believe, taking the initiative. In 1868 ninety-five thousand tons of alfa grass were exported to England alone, the quantity now exported having risen to one hundred and twenty-five thousand tons."—*Fraser's Magazine, October*, 1877.

Mirages are constantly seen on this part of the plateau.

GUELT-EL-STEL, sixty-two miles from Bokhari, is the first night's resting-place. The caravansary is tolerable. It is situated on a pine-crowned hill, the only break to the vast extent of plain for a distance of some thirty-five leagues.

The second day's journey is, like the first, through the plain—what may perhaps be called the second steppe of the Sahara—the whole surface one uniform yellowish grey, alfa the principal vegetation, with occasional clumps of lentisk.

The road passes between two shallow but very extensive salt lakes, the Zahrez, on the borders of which are said to be some springs of sweet water. These lakes are the resort of the flamingo and many other aquatic birds.

"On approaching the lake a long white line could be seen stretching across it, looking somewhat by its slightly undulatory motion, like the foam of a line of breakers on a reef. But the alarm is given; the white line becomes animated, rises and expands; first of a snowy white, then, as the birds simultaneously turn, unfolding thousands of black wings, it appears a dark speckled confused mass; then, as they wheel from the spectator, the soft pink colour of their backs and wings absorbs all other hues, and, screaming with outstretched necks, they fly off, an animated rosy cloud. This is the most gorgeous sight on which a naturalist's eyes can feast."—*The Great Sahara. Canon Tristram.*

Twenty-five miles from Guelt-el-Stel, the famous *Rocher de Sel* is reached. Here the diligence waits for an hour. This is no doubt one of the salt mountains mentioned by Herodotus, as occurring in the desert of Libya, and which were long believed to be fabulous. It is most beautiful in colouring and curious in form. It is a double-headed ridge, half a mile in diameter, covered with débris of blue slaty clay, mingled with sharp fragments of limestone. It is entirely without vegetation; and the surface, calcined by the combined action of the sun and the water percolating from beneath, has fallen away and formed itself into hundreds of strange holes and chasms, each one of which is lined with glittering stalactites of salt. In these holes and

nooks the rock-doves build. The whole mass is sparkling with light and colour, with rays of red, blue and orange, which blend and shade themselves into all the delicate hues of varied greys.

From the rock a number of little streams of milky whiteness make their way, and unite in two channels, which are filled to the brim with shining salt-crystals, that catch and reflect the sun's rays in myriad beams of light.

From the salt-rocks to Djelfa the scenery is pretty, compared with the drab monotony of the previous day's journey, the road passing along and ascending low ranges of hills, covered with brushwood and surmounted with pines.

A few miles north-west of the salt-rock, is the place where the Duc d'Aumale surprised and captured Abd-el-Kader's *smala*.

Djelfa, seventeen miles beyond the Rocher, where the diligence rests for an hour or two, is a neat little town, possessing one or two good inns. It is situated at a height of 3,400 feet above the sea-level, and has a somewhat bleak and cold climate. Here was an old Roman station, the only one possessed by the Romans in the Sahara; and this was probably only intended as a protection for the salt-works, which were even at that period of much account. The policy of the Romans inclined them rather to establish themselves strongly in the Tell, and to leave the Sahara to itself. The French, on the contrary, push on their settlements into the heart of the desert, and take pride in the fact that their sway is acknowledged, and their civilization extended, in regions where the Romans did not dare to adventure their legions.

More interesting even than the Roman remains at Djelfa,

are the megalithic monuments, which speak of a yet earlier occupation, unless indeed they are, as some have asserted, the tombs of the British cohort in Roman employ. This explanation of the presence of these antique monuments in Africa, has now however, been generally abandoned by *savants*, and we must refer these desert-dolmens to the same primitive epoch, which is assigned to the similar monuments found on the coast near Algiers (page 355).

Near Djelfa, past the dolmens, is a large forest in which a troop of spahis is stationed.

AÏN-EL-IBEL, where the diligence stops for the second night, is twenty-three miles beyond Djelfa, and is situated in the midst of a fertile plain, largely used for pasturage.

The caravansary at this place is good.

The famous long-snouted rats—*rats à trompe*—are found in a ridge of rocks on this plain. The species is, however, very rare, and Canon Tristram tells us that when first discovered, in consequence of the sensation produced among the learned, and the reward offered for specimens by the French general in command at Djelfa, the demand was promptly supplied by the handy Zouaves, who manufactured the strange beast by cutting off a piece from one common rat's tail, and sewing it on to the nose of another. Various specimens of this kind were forwarded to learned societies in France!

The third day's journey, a course of sixty-two miles, brings the traveller from Aïn-el-Ibel (the well of the camel) to his long-desired goal, El-Aghouat.

The break is on this day at Sidi Maklouf, which is reached after passing through Ham'ra, a miserable hamlet, but surrounded with gardens and fruit-trees, the road

continuing through wide reaches of the monotonous alfa.

SIDI MAKLOUF is a caravansary picturesquely situated on a rocky plateau on the border of a stream, and has attached to it, a well-cultivated garden. Near the inn, with its group of palm-trees, is the koubba which gives its name to the place, not domed like the koubbas of Algiers, but sugar-loafed after the Saharan fashion.

This place has an unpleasant reputation for scorpions.

From Sidi Maklouf the road crosses a bridge, and winds up and down among ragged sand-hills, bearing marks to which geologists point as clearly indicating an ancient sea-beach—a primeval rocky coast-line before the Sahara was, or while the Sahara was making, for the water seems to have receded by slow degrees. At length, through an opening between the mountains, the traveller, weary of the long monotony of his journey, will hail with delight as he enters a wide-spreading plain, a distant vision in the dim violet horizon of a solitary rock, or rather of a ridge of rock cut in half, on whose crests the dim outline of serrated walls is silhoueted against the cloudless sky. In the depression between the two crags, as the distance lessens, glisten white the buildings of a town, thrown up against a mass of dark green.

The traveller looks, and hesitates, and wonders. It is—no, it is not—a phantom of the desert, this vision of verdure and human life. No, the long wearisome journey is almost at an end; before him lies El-Aghouat, the desert island—El-Aghouat embosomed in its forests of palms.

"A grand hilly country dying away into a flat expanse, bathed in eternal light, wide enough and desolate enough to give the notion of

that strange land we know as the Desert; with silence on all sides, and a changeless tranquil heaven. In the centre of the plain, a lost city—lost in solitude, a patch of verdure, a sandhill, a reef of chalky rocks on the shores of a boundless ocean——"

This, according to Fromentin, is El-Aghouat.

EL-AGHOUAT, or, as it is called by the French, Laghouat (Hôtel de la Poste—good), is situated 2,437 feet above the level of the sea, and possesses a climate by no means so oppressive as its position in the desert would lead one to suppose, although in summer the thermometer reaches 113° in the shade! In winter, snow is not unknown, and rain frequent. It is a spot of remarkable fertility, owing to its copious supply of water—a matter which has long puzzled the learned, but it is believed to derive its moisture, not only from the stream which flows through it, but from a subterranean river, which, in its endeavours to rise to the surface, forms the luxuriant oasis. The palm-trees, which constitute the chief wealth of the place, are said to number at least twenty-one thousand. They begin to bear fruit when seven or eight years old, and continue bearing for nearly two hundred years, but as they grow very old the fruit is not so good.

The male tree which bears no fruit, blossoms in March, when the buds of the female trees begin to open. A portion of the male pollen is then inserted in the calyx of the date-palm. The fruit ripens in October. The various date-gardens are divided by low walls, and each proprietor has a right to the water which flows through his ground, for one, or two, hours in the day, according to his tenure.

The palm-groves are the resort of thousands of migratory birds, and are, in fact, the winter abode of many of our

most familiar English songsters, which chirp and peck the dates, in evident satisfaction with their southern fare.

Not only do dates flourish at El-Aghouat, but all kinds of fruit-trees, especially peaches, and in the winter, vegetables of every sort are in abundance.

There is a considerable manufacture of haiks, burnous, and red leather, said to equal that of Morocco, dyed with the inner rind of the pomegranate.

El-Aghouat formerly consisted of two distinct villages, each seated on its own rock, occupied by rival tribes, between whom a constant state of warfare was maintained. Ben Salem, Abd-el-Kader's lieutenant, built a palace here, and united the hostile factions of the city.

It was taken by storm December 4th, 1852, by General Pelissier, after a most gallant resistance. The streets were absolutely barricaded with bodies, and flowing with blood, after which a siege had to be laid to every house in the town separately—in fact, almost the entire population was massacred.

M. Fromentin, who visited it in the year following, says "there is not a stone which does not bear its siege mark," and the whole aspect of the place was then desolate in the extreme.

A French town has since been built, with a "place" and beautiful garden, the old Arab buildings having been swept away to make room for them. The Arab streets are as usual narrow and tortuous, the flat-roofed mud-houses possessing no windows, and having low doorways beneath the level of the street.

Near El-Aghouat is a hill called the "Rocher des Chiens," from the circumstance, that when the town was

stormed, and so many of its inhabitants killed, the dogs, thus deprived of their masters, and inheriting their hatred of the Roumi foe, retired in a body, to the number it is said of two hundred, to this rock, from whence they descended at night for predatory excursions. *Se non e vero, e ben trovato.*

The view from the heights of El-Aghouat, on one of which is the koubba of the holy man who predicted the coming of the French, Sidi Aïssa, and from whose sepulchre the French guns were pointed, is very impressive. To the north and east it is bounded by rocky ranges, but southward the desert stretches in limitless expanse, without a trace of animal or vegetable life, melting away into the horizon unbroken by a single elevation.

"A survey from the summit of the lofty cliffs above this strange town, so oriental, so different from anything yet seen in Algeria, impresses one with the conviction that the real unbroken desert of sand and camels and vultures, is before one at last. But experience and near acquaintanceship dispel this illusion, for endless Dayats, or unimprovable oases, extend for a considerable distance south, often brown and parched-up until rain falls, after which in a few days, they will be covered with the richest pasturage, especially under the shade of the terebinth and wild jujubes, which latter, the *Zizyphus spina-Christi*, flourishes all over the Southern Sahara."—*Scenes in the Sunny South.*

Indeed, far south in the Mozab country, we hear of splendid corn-crops, forests of palms, and seven cities rendered prosperous and fruitful, by the exertions of our old acquaintances, the butchers and vegetable vendors of Algiers.

Even the country of the Touaregs, those fierce robbers of the desert, who with veiled faces scour the sandy wastes on their flying camels, to prey upon the passing caravan—that country into which so few Europeans have as yet

penetrated—is said to have its pleasant spots, its fruitful valleys, and wooded hills. In truth, it would seem that Nature abhors a desert, in the true sense of the word, as she abhors a vacuum.

Excursions to the Mozab cities and to Ouargla are possible under military protection to adventurous travellers, but as to these, the present writer can venture to offer no advice or suggestion. The ordinary tourist will probably find his outlook over the desert, from the heights of El-Aghouat sufficient for him; but if he have a desire to taste its wild delights, and run its many risks, if he be in search of solitude or anxious for new sensations, the land is all before him where to choose, untrodden except by the rare caravan, the Arab ostrich-hunter, or the marching column.

This for the present; but who may say how long this state of affairs may last? The question is seriously entertained among the world's wise men, of flooding the lowlands of the Sahara, of restoring to its original condition the vast inland sea, which, studded with luxuriant islands, should unite rather than separate Southern and Northern Africa, and moderate by its beneficent influences, the blasts of the poisonous sirocco.

Then, if this marvel should be in truth accomplished, will the geography of the continent have to be re-written, and the chief care of future guide-book writers be to give a correct time-table of the Saharan steamers!

But all this is in the far future, and—*après nous le déluge*, as the French say.

Of summer life at El-Aghouat, M. Fromentin writes—

"Here is little variety, little novelty, the sun rising on the desert and setting behind the hills, day after day. Short dawns, long noons, no

dusk, full light until the last minute of day, when night comes suddenly as though the day had swooned! A sun always calm and devouring, sometimes a sudden expansion of light and heat, a burning wind which for the moment gives a menacing aspect to the landscape, but, as a rule, a radiant immobility, a dead impassiveness in the heaven which reflects itself upon the earth, and upon the faces of its inhabitants! The heat of the sun at noon on the walls and on the pavement is terrible; the dogs utter little cries of pain as their feet touch it; all the shops and houses are shut, the end of the street towards the west is wrapped in flame-colour. Gradually as the shadows lengthen doors open, great figures pale and sad, clad in white, appear with lowered heads, and range themselves along the shady wall. They begin the day on the left side of the street, they end it on the right. This is the only difference they know between morning and evening. A desert town is, in fact, a spot amid arid wastes, where Providence has by exception put water, where human industry has made shade, where women group themselves about the fountain, where the men lie sleeping all the day under the shadow of the wall—this is the whole life."—*Un Été dans le Sahara.*

Yet the history of the siege of El-Aghouat, surely proclaims that beneath this impassible exterior, fire smoulders, and that once roused from his habitual lethargy, the inhabitant of the sun-scorched land, has scarcely less of courage, energy, or endurance, than the children of northern skies and temperate zones.

Only he must be roused—and there is an old French proverb which always seems peculiarly applicable to the Arab race, *N'éveillez pas le chat qui dort.*

CHAPTER XXVI.

KOLEAH.—MARENGO.—TIPASA.—TOMBEAU DE LA CHRÉTIENNE.—CHERCHEL.

"There stands a structure of majestic frame."
Pope.

For this route a carriage is recommended, as the public vehicles are anything but good. They are nothing better than very rough and dirty omnibuses, filled with Arabs and Spaniards, the coupé, or that which is, by a stretch of politeness called such, being simply the box-seat of the vehicle beside the driver. This is available for two persons. The horses of the diligences are particularly good.

A diligence-omnibus runs twice a day, morning and afternoon, from Blidah to Koleah. Fare 1 fr.

The route is a very uninteresting one, being almost without a turn or a curve, from one town to the other across the plain of Metidja. The drive occupies about two hours.

Koleah may also be reached from Algiers by diligençe (twice a day) in about five hours. The road is by Staouëli (Chap. XXI.), beyond that, the pretty villages of Zeralda and Daouda are passed, the river Mazafran being crossed on a bridge of boats.

KOLEAH lies on a wooded elevation some four hundred and fifty feet above the sea, overlooking the vast plain of the Metidja. It has a population of nearly four thousand souls, but appears remarkably small, especially when it is considered that the houses are but of one story. They are built, for the most part, round courtyards, which are covered-in with vine-wreathed trellis-work. The town is still very

Arab in character, and European visitors are regarded even yet with a certain amount of curiosity and interest.

Hôtel de France, a thoroughly primitive little inn, uninviting on first entrance, will be found extremely clean and comfortable, and the cooking especially good. Dinner 3 fr. The landlord, himself the *chef*, will be seen in white jacket and cap, deep in the mysteries of the kitchen, and the pretty waitress and daughter of the house brings a message from "mon papa," as she hands one course, about the traveller's wishes as to the next. There are only three bedrooms in the inn, so it is as well to write beforehand to secure accommodation.

Koleah is regarded with great veneration by the Arabs, and is still known as the Holy City, from the fact of the celebrated marabout, Sidi Embarek, having lived and died here.

His passport to sanctity seems to have been a remarkable capacity for sleep. The legend related of him is, that, being as a youth, a farm servant to a certain Arab land-owner, he was accustomed to sleep through the whole day, his oxen miraculously performing their work without his superintendence. According to our notions, the oxen would seem to have been deserving of more veneration than their sleepy-headed attendant; but the matter did not appear in this light to Embarek's master. Having ascertained the truth of the report with his own eyes, he, instead of dismissing or chastising the careless servant, fell on his knees before him, acknowledged him as a saint, and when he died left him all his property.

Sidi Embarek kept up his reputation of prophet by performing, so it is said, many miracles during his life spent

at Koleah, and when he died, he was buried on the spot where he had lived.

The earthquake of 1825, which destroyed Blidah, also ruined Koleah, but spared, we are told, the koubba of the holy man; after which Mustapha Pasha (somewhat inconsequently) rebuilt it.

The French have held possession of Koleah ever since 1839.

The principal mosque, a handsome building, with a lofty and elegant minaret attached, is now used as a military hospital. The koubba of Sidi Embarek is close to it.

Here was also the burying-place of Abd-el-Kader's family.

The greatest attraction of Koleah is the "Jardin des Zouaves," a name given in honour of the soldiers who employed their leisure in laying it out. The garden is not only a collection of rare and beautiful plants and flowers, but, from the peculiar conformation of the ground, it is most picturesque. Among the perfume of aromatic shrubs, and the singing of thrushes and nightingales—for Algerian nightingales sing all day long—no pleasanter lounge for a sunny spring day can well be imagined, than a rustic bench in the Zouaves' Garden at Koleah.

From Koleah, carriage or horseback excursion to the *Tombeau de la Chrétienne.*

There is no public conveyance, but there is an omnibus-diligence twice a day, at 5 A.M. and at noon, to Marengo, where carriages may also be hired; and "Murray" suggests, that for persons who wish to visit this remarkable monument and to return to Algiers the same day, it would be best to take the 6 A.M. or 8 A.M. train from Algiers to

El-Affroun, having previously telegraphed to the maire of Marengo to send a carriage thence to meet the train.

The present writer strongly recommends instead, a night passed at the comfortable little Hôtel de France at Koleah, and a drive thence to the Tombeau.

The diligence from Koleah to Marengo (for Cherchel) passes the foot of the hill on which the Tombeau stands, but does not permit any near approach to the monument.

The road which runs all the way through the Metidja, just behind the Sahel, or range of shore-hills, is somewhat monotonous, the country being even yet in a great measure uncleared, the ground covered with a thick brushwood of palmetto, and overgrown with deadly asphodel—deadly in more ways than one, since the Arabs have learned the trick of making absinthe from it!

Here and there are woods of wild olives and oaks, and occasional patches of cultivation. Now and then, dreary-looking European settlements are passed, chiefly inhabited by Spaniards; but these are comparatively few and far between, and the settlers have a somewhat famished and fever-stricken appearance. They seem to be for the most part employed in charcoal-burning.

This side of the Metidja had at one time almost as evil a reputation for unhealthiness as Bou-Farik, but great exertions have been made by the French to drain it, and no doubt, as the land is reclaimed and becomes inhabited, the same good results will follow. The Lake Halloula, which was formerly situated just below the hill on which is the Tombeau de la Chrétienne, was a fruitful source of fever, and the favourite haunt of the sportsman, as it abounded with wild duck and snipe.

This has now been drained at considerable loss of life to the convict-workmen who were engaged in the task, but the benefit of the change is already being felt.

Apart from the Tombeau, the only objects of interest on this route, are the collections of quaint and sometimes picturesque Arab *gourbis*, which are seen every now and then peeping out of the brushwood, and the quaint Arab figures which are met with on the road, tramping along with their huge shepherd's staves held at their backs, or jogging on their unhappy and heavily-laden donkeys, on which they perch in side-saddle fashion, their bare heels acting as spurs, their loose slippers depending in comical fashion from the toes.

Whatever may be the traditional love of the Arab for his horse, his kindly consideration certainly does not descend to the hard-working and sadly ill-treated ass or *bouricot*, as the animal is locally called.

But in truth, the Arab horses which are ordinarily met with at the markets and on the roads, do not seem to fare much better than the humbler beast of burden. They are all thin and jaded-looking creatures, ungroomed, and often covered with sores.

This part of the Metidja is the habitat of the notorious Hadjoutes, who proved so formidable to the early French settlers, and some of the farms on the route are still fortified.

THE TOMBEAU DE LA CHRÉTIENNE.—The name given to this monument by the natives, is Kober-Roumia, the tomb of the Christian woman, the various legends which group themselves about it, having evident reference to the Berber princess, Queen Kaïna, whose mythical exploits are still celebrated in Arab story; but it is proved to be of far

greater antiquity, and is now decided to be, without any doubt, the mausoleum of Juba II., who reigned in such magnificence at Cherchel, and of his wife Cleopatra, daughter of Antony and the famous Egyptian queen.

It is a stone mass, circular at the base, where its diameter is 198 feet, and rising with four diminishing sides, to a height of 100 feet, having originally been nearly one-fourth higher. On the one side it overlooks the sea, on the other the Metidja, and can be seen from a distance of sixty miles.

The monument is far more curious than beautiful, having at a distance the appearance of an enormous haystack. If, as is supposed, it is in truth the tomb of the Mauritanian kings, it is remarkable that it is placed in such a position, as to be seen throughout the whole extent of country except from Cherchel, from which Mount Chenoua entirely conceals it; the supposition being, that the monarch, in preparing this magnificent mausoleum for his race, avoided the perpetual remembrance of his own mortality, which the sight of it from his capital would have suggested—"as Louis XIV. abandoned the palace of St. Germains, because from it St. Denis, the burial-place of the French kings, was always in his sight," says M. Berbrugger, to whose researches we are indebted for all our information respecting the Tombeau.

The monument was mentioned by Pomponius Mela, who wrote about 45 B.C., as the common mausoleum of the royal family of Mauritania. The geographer Marmol speaks of it as being *falsely* supposed to be the tomb of Cava, the frail daughter of Count Julian. His translators, as M. Berbrugger is at some pains to point out in his interesting pamphlet on the matter, unscrupulously left out the word

"falsely," and the memory of Count Julian's daughter clung so closely to the monument, that in Spanish maps, the bay upon which the Tombeau stands, was always marked as "the gulf of the wicked woman." M. Berbrugger proves however, to demonstration, that Juba II. and his wife, and they alone, were interred here.

But whoever may have been the original occupants of the mausoleum, its great antiquity is a matter on which there can be no doubt, and the mystery which has for centuries clung about it, enhances not a little the interest with which the modern traveller must regard it.

"Far above other remains in interest, as it towers above them in grandeur, is this mausoleum of a royal race, whose very name and history have utterly perished. Pomponius Mela alludes to it eighteen hundred years ago, and even then its origin seems to have been lost in antiquity; yet to this day it stands, with scarcely any perceptible injury from the ravages of time. A conspicuous landmark both from the Mediterranean and the plain, in its utter solitude and desolation, it has a grandeur beyond that of the pyramids of Egypt. It is more impressive, for there is nothing near it with which to compare it. It is, like them, composed of huge squared stones clamped together with iron, but is of the shape of a truncated cone, circular, with the apex flattened."—*The Great Sahara. Canon Tristram.*

Marmol, who was a slave in Algeria, and probably saw the monument, says, "It is made of very great stones and closed on all sides."

Dr. Shaw, who described it, but did not, it seems, visit it, on account of the wild nature of the country and the dangers to be incurred from the Hadjoutes, writes, "According to the discoveries hitherto made, it is a solid and compact edifice built with the finest freestone."

Indeed, it was generally believed to be a mass of solid masonry until quite recently, when the explorations of

M. Berbrugger revealed the existence of the long-hidden entrance. These explorations were undertaken by the command, and at the private expense, of the Emperor Napoleon III., whose attention was attracted to the monument, during his tour in Algeria in 1865.

Various legends among the natives had long pointed to the fact, that an entrance into the tomb was possible, and according to these, the monument contained vast stores of hidden treasures; but, in modern times at least, the natives had been deterred from any attempt to penetrate into its mysterious chambers, by superstitious fears, and possibly by their national reverence for the resting-places of the dead.

Salah Reis, one of the Turkish governors of Algiers, attempted to break into it in the year 1556, and at the end of the eighteenth century, Baba Mohammed tried to batter it down by means of artillery. The old tomb resisted even this rude assault, and from this time was left undisturbed in the midst of pathless desolation, until its mysteries were finally laid bare by the energetic French antiquarian.

Of the legends current among the natives concerning the monument, the best known and most popular, is that first published in M. Pelissier de Raynaud's "Annales Algériennes," and since repeated by many travellers in the country.

It relates how, long ago, a certain man of the Hadjoutes, Youssef-ben-Hassen by name, was taken prisoner by the Christians and carried far away into their country as a slave. One day, when at work in the fields, thinking sadly of his sunny country, his distant home, his beloved wife and children, a venerable man approached him and asked if, being an Arab, he knew the Koubar-Roumia.

"Alas!" said Youssef, "it is but a few leagues from the home I shall never again see."

"Dost thou desire to return there? Dost thou desire liberty?" asked the stranger.

The answer of Youssef may easily be imagined.

"I will pay thy ransom and secure thy return on one condition," said the Christian.

Youssef inquired what that might be, and promised anything that might not be contrary to the law of God and the Prophet.

"It is this," said the stranger, producing a scroll covered with curious characters. "When thou hast returned, go to Koubar-Roumia, kindle a little fire before the monument, and burn in it, this scroll."

Youssef joyfully promised obedience, received the scroll and his liberty, and soon after found himself in the embraces of his family and friends.

True to his word, on the fourth day after his return, he set out at daybreak for the mysterious Koubar, and having lighted a small fire of sticks, threw on it the scroll. No sooner was the paper consumed, than thousands of gold and silver pieces at once began to spring out between the stones of the tomb, and after buzzing a moment in the air like a swarm of bees, began flying away in a straight line across the sea, to the land of the Christians. Youssef, recovering from the momentary stupor caused by so marvellous a sight, and anxious to obtain some share of the good things which were literally taking to themselves wings above his head, unwrapped his burnous, and flinging it upwards, succeeded in catching a golden shower. But no sooner did the coins touch the earth, than the precious stream

ceased to flow from the Koubar, and, except for the shining heap at his feet, Youssef would have believed that he had been the victim of an illusion. Bearing his spoil to the Pasha as proof of the marvel, and hoping for future rewards, he told his tale of wonder.

The Pasha instantly sent workmen to demolish the Koubar, so as to possess himself of the treasure, but at the first blow of the hammer, a phantom lady appeared on the top of the tomb crying out in an unearthly voice, "Halloula! Halloula! to my aid. They are come to rob me." On this appeal, from the lake below poured forth an army of gigantic gnats, which gradually grew larger and larger till they became the size of birds, and which with their venomous stings effectually put the workmen to flight.

Another legend, and not so well known, is as follows:—

An Arab who was accustomed to pasture his goats in the neighbourhood of the Koubar, evening after evening, when he drove them home, missed one, but always found it in the morning, grazing at the foot of the Tombeau. One evening, to his astonishment, he observed the creature making its way up to the Tombeau, and then suddenly disappearing. The next evening he watched more closely. The goat approached the monument, rubbed her head against one of the stones, which fell back to admit her, and instantly reclosed. The next evening the same thing occurred. Seized with a spirit of adventure—on the third evening, the Arab laid hold of the goat, and was drawn with her into the mysterious building.

He described the interior of the Koubar to be a vast hall piled with jewels and gold, where in the centre on a glittering throne sat a little child, for whose nourishment

the goat paid her nocturnal visit—an earthly child apparently, though born, it was confidently asserted, of the fairy guardian of the tomb, Halloula, and of the spectral lady.

M. Berbrugger paid a visit to the monument in the year 1835, on the first occasion of the French army penetrating to this part of the coast. He then describes the country about the Koubar as a trackless jungle, and the tomb itself as an object of such superstitious dread, that no native could be induced to approach it.

In 1843, M. Berbrugger, M. Piesse, and other scientific men, made an examination of the exterior of the building. In 1855, Marshal Randon commissioned M. Berbrugger to make an exploration of the monument, but the scheme fell to the ground for want of funds.

At length, in July 1865, M. Berbrugger, aided by M. MacCarthy, and other gentlemen, with a body of convict workmen, set resolutely to the task of investigation. But it was not until after seven months of continuous work, that the soundings promised a cavity. Ten days more were employed in removing the mass of rubbish, which had accumulated at the base of the monument. An entrance was then, at last, effected into the corridor which runs almost entirely round the interior of the building—this was on the south side. The actual door of entrance was discovered later, on the east side, underneath the large false door with which each face of the Tombeau was decorated. There can be no doubt that the rough efforts of the Turkish despot to unravel the mystery of the tomb, had more effectually concealed it, by heaping the débris over the entrance.

The first person to cross the actual threshold was the

Maréchale MacMahon. M. Berbrugger explains, that to the Emperor himself this honour properly belonged—it was delegated to his representative the Marshal, but French gallantry naturally came to the fore—the Marshaless accompanying her husband on the expedition, which he took for the purpose of formally entering the building. To the nineteenth-century lady then, was given the key of the mystery, which the mythical lady of so many ages back, had so long and so carefully concealed!

To a certain extent, the investigations of the monument proved a disappointment.

It was found to contain, a small vestibule adorned with rude sculptures of a lion and a lioness, a gallery following the circle of the building, and leading to two mortuary chambers, one larger than the other; but these had been already rifled of their contents, and no mark or inscription of any kind was left, to throw light upon the long dead past. M. Berbrugger's theory is, that the tomb was probably entered and violated soon after the interment of Juba—certainly during the first century of the Christian era.

Juba's son Ptolemy was murdered at Rome, and with him the race of the Mauritanian kings came to an end. It was then, M. Berbrugger concludes, that the tomb was broken into, and probably remained open for some very considerable time, since traces were found in it of human occupation, extending over a considerable period.

In one place, a rough wall had been built, so as to shut off a space evidently used as a human habitation—possibly a refuge for some early persecuted Christians. A considerable amount of very ancient Berber pottery, some broken Egyptian jewellery, and a good deal of human hair were

found in it. But M. Berbrugger considers, that no human vestiges point to a later period, than the beginning of the seventh century, and does not think the Arabs had at any time penetrated within it.

The whole history of the monument is curious. Careful examination of the exterior, has resulted in the finding of various relics of successive visitors—among which are, a coin dating from the reign of Juba II., a Maltese coin of the twelfth century, part of a fibula, an antique bracelet, and a small silver crucifix of very early work, together with many other small treasures.

The interior of the monument can be visited without any difficulty. Key to be procured at the foot of the hill. The view from the summit is very extensive—the climb most fatiguing. It may be, perhaps, as well to remind travellers that in ordering a carriage for the Tombeau, it should be specified that the hill must be ascended, otherwise the coachman will refuse to go further than the foot of the hill on which the Tombeau stands, involving a long and steep walk.

The four sides into which the monument was originally divided by Ionic columns, represent the four points of the compass; and a French naturalist, M. Jourdan, has discovered that a wholly different class of vegetation prevails on each side. He gives a list of seventy-nine species of plants to be found on the Tombeau, which, divided into their different sections, produce a perfect floral calendar, and establishes a theory that "plants living freely on a soil of the same geological formation, exposed to the same climatic influences, and unsheltered, will gradually group themselves in the order of their proper florescence, and

according to the four cardinal points, N.E. representing spring, S.E. summer, S.W. autumn, and N.W. winter."

At Marengo, the traveller who avails himself of the public conveyance from Koleah to Cherchel, will have to change carriages, meeting the omnibus which comes from El-Affroun.

Marengo is a large and prosperous village of the ordinary French type, situated in the midst of orchards and productive vineyards, and with avenues of plane-trees through the streets, and a fine fountain in the "Place." An important Arab market is held here on Wednesdays, but otherwise there is little to attract the traveller in it, and the place has an evil reputation for extortion.

It possesses two inns, one rather worse than the other—that of Madame La Place is the best, but a bargain should be made as to prices.

Marengo, from its central position, is convenient as a resting-place, and it is the nearest point from which the interesting ruins of the Roman seaport town Tipasa, can be visited. An almost straight road, nine miles in length, runs to this spot from Marengo, passing over several water-courses, and through a fine wood of elm-trees intermixed with evergreen oaks.

A few modern cottages have risen up among the débris of the ancient city, but comparatively little has been done in the way of clearing, arranging, or spoiling the ruins, and they line the shore and stretch out under the blue sea in all the grandeur of their desolation.

It is still, as the Arabs call the place, *Tfessadt*—the defaced.

The greater portion of the site of the ancient town has

been "allotted" to a French gentleman of antiquarian taste, who has built a house here, and made a collection of some of the most interesting objects which have been found among the ruins.

The most important ruins are the remains of a large square church, the massive stone walls of which are wonderfully perfect; a theatre, the quay and port, some extensive vaulted cisterns, fed by an aqueduct which reaches almost to Marengo; portions of the town walls, and a vast number of tombs, or rather stone coffins standing above the ground, into which the burned ashes of the dead were probably put. These are all without inscriptions, though on some of them the A and O, the Christian monogram, was found.

Tipasa was a colony of veterans founded by the Emperor Claudius. It is mentioned by Ptolemy and in the Itinerary of Antoninus. In the year 484 Huneric, the Vandal king, appointed an Arian bishop to the Catholic see of Tipasa, in consequence of which many of the inhabitants of the city fled to Spain, and those who remained and refused to conform to the Arian doctrine, suffered the mutilation of their right hands and tongues.

There is a pleasant ride from Tipasa to Cherchel along the coast through the marble quarries of Chenoua.

The road from Marengo to Cherchel, twenty-one miles, is an interesting one. It turns at once from the plain through a hilly and wooded country, except where here and there laid bare by the incendiary fires of the Arabs. Afterwards the road runs parallel with the Chenoua Mountains, up the sides of which the corn-fields and pastures of the industrious Kabyles climb almost to the top.

But there is scarcely a sign of habitation until, about ten miles from Marengo, the picturesquely situated village of Zurich is reached.

This village, founded in 1848 on the ruins of a Roman villa, made a gallant stand in 1871 against the Kabyle insurgents, though defended only by seventy men, of whom forty were military convicts.

Beyond Zurich the country increases both in beauty and interest. The road leaves the valley of Oued-el-Hachem, in which Zurich is situated, and crossing a range of richly wooded hills, dips down into a valley which is spanned by the magnificent arches of a Roman aqueduct, said to be second only to that of Carthage. This formerly supplied Julia Cæsarea with water, and seventeen arches in three tiers, one above the other, 116 feet high, stand intact "in solitary grandeur amid the stillness of nature."

"We saw nothing in Rome more striking than these magnificent remains," says the author of "Algeria as It Is."

Even more picturesque than the perfect arches, are the dismembered fragments of the same great aqueduct, which are met with, further along the road and nearer to Cherchel: huge masses of solid masonry, hanging as it seems by a very thread far up in the air, and threatening, as they have threatened for centuries past, the too rash beholder with instant destruction.

The approach to Cherchel through the lofty hills, or indeed mountains, with which it is surrounded, is extremely fine.

Cherchel itself is also most beautifully situated on a point standing out to sea, with a perfect amphitheatre of wooded

and cultivated hills at its back, and the noble curves of the bay for its coast scenery.

CHERCHEL, seventy-two miles from Algiers. Route direct from Algiers or Blidah: train to El-Affroun. Diligence thence to Cherchel passing through Marengo twice a day.

The air of Cherchel is very delightful, almost, if not quite, as warm as that of Algiers, but yet with a certain freshness and purity which the atmosphere of the larger city lacks.

It possesses an excellent little hotel (Hôtel du Commerce), kept by a pretty, bright, young Frenchwoman (dinner 3 fr.). And for those who like quiet, and appreciate the charms of a beautiful country, nothing could be pleasanter than a stay for a few days here; especially would it be enjoyed by those who possess antiquarian or archæological tastes; for such Cherchel would prove a mine of almost inexhaustible wealth.

It is indeed somewhat curious that Cherchel should not be more frequented than it is—than the very limited hotel accommodation implies. It is a pity that there is no direct public communication with Algiers, and that the diligences are not of a more respectable kind. Even the coasting steamers, which formerly called here from Oran, have ceased to run since the railway was opened, so poor little Cherchel, with all its grand memories and antiquarian treasures, is left quite out in the cold.

"For those who have no resources in themselves, Cherchel must be a dull sojourn. What has a man to do here who does not know its history, and cares not a Barbary fig about it? Who has no taste for nature, and is ignorant of art, who can neither draw nor paint, is not a sportsman, and does not like fishing? For whom there is no society,

where English is not spoken:—where there is no club, no *Times*, nothing in short, that he is used to, and which is necessary to his existence? Such persons, after a superficial view of the remains, vote the ancient city a bore, and wonder what people discover interesting, where there is nothing to see; as if they expected to find Julia Cæsarea still standing in all its glory! Two classes of English, in particular, visit Cherchel—those who find nothing, and those who find too much. We have spoken of the first; the other travellers are *dilettanti* archæologists, who copy every scrap of inscription into their note-books, fill their trunks with stones, which they treasure up for mosaics, and buy coins on which, after a good deal of rubbing, they sometimes bring out an excellent likeness of Napoleon III.

"Of course, real archæologists also come to Cherchel; for them the site of Julia Cæsarea must indeed be a fruitful field for labour. Besides these, there are no doubt some stray tourists, men of taste and intelligence, who do not regret having passed a few days on a spot, charming at present, and more than interesting from its association with the past. As to ourselves, we remained a fortnight at the excellent hotel, one of the best in the three provinces, at once *gemüthlich*—to use an untranslatable German word, which expresses even more than our cherished word comfortable—and superior. Our time was spent most agreeably; we had plenty to sketch and paint, and, as to society, all the officers in Cherchel breakfasted and dined at the inn."—*Algeria as It Is.*

There is plenty of hunting to be had in the neighbourhood of Cherchel, wild boars having greatly multiplied, it is said, in this district, since the disarming of the Kabyles after the late rebellion. The natives have a legend that wild boars, of which they make no use as food, are not indigenous to the country, but were introduced by the Spaniards, in order to irritate the prejudices of the Mahomedan natives. However that may be, the unclean animals have made themselves tolerably at home in it.

The history of Cherchel dates back to the Carthaginian times, when it was a place of some importance, known as Jol; but the days of its glory were under the reign of the learned and ambitious Juba II., who made it the capital of

his kingdom of Mauritania, and named it Julia Cæsarea. After this it was destroyed by the Berber chieftain Firmus, to be rebuilt and thrown down again, more than once in the course of its stormy history. Kheir-ed-din Barbarossa took possession of it, and in 1531, the Spanish Admiral Doria burnt the fleet which the pirate chief had assembled in the port, but he was unable to hold the town.

It was visited by Dr. Shaw, who writes—

"Shershell was the Iol or Julia Cæsarea so famous in history. When I saw it (A.D. 1730) it was in great reputation for making steel, earthen vessels, and iron tools, but a few years afterwards (1738), it was entirely thrown down by an earthquake. The ruins upon which this town are situated are not inferior in extent to those of Carthage, and we may likewise conceive no small opinion of its former magnificence, from the fine pillars, capitols, capacious cisterns, and beautiful mosaic pavements that are everywhere remaining."—*Dr. Shaw's Travels.*

These are no longer to be found, but considering the various vicissitudes which the city has suffered, it is perhaps not surprising, that but comparatively few remains exist of the Roman period.

Nor in this matter can the French be acquitted of Vandalism, for at the time of their conquest, it is certain that various important ruins were to be found in the town, which have now altogether disappeared.

In fact there are no ancient buildings of any kind remaining, but objects of interest are to be met everywhere, exemplifying the unscrupulous manner in which the classical ruins have been used as quarries—sculptured cornices built in here, fluted pillars inserted there, amid the meanest surroundings.

The "Place" of the modern town, a promenade shaded

by beautiful old trees beside the sea, is strewn with marble columns, and disjointed shafts and capitols; the little museum, an open yard with a shed round it, contains some interesting fragments, busts and statues, some of which were dug up out of the harbour, where was also found a Roman boat more than thirty feet long, filled with pottery.

The port was of considerable importance in the time of the Romans. To quote Dr. Shaw—

"They have a tradition that the ancient city was destroyed as the new one was lately, by an earthquake, and that the port, formerly very large and commodious, was reduced to the miserable condition wherein we find it at present, by the arsenal and other adjacent buildings being thrown into it by the shock. And when the sea is calm and the water low, as it frequently happens after strong south or east winds, we then discover all over the area of it so many pillars and pieces of great walls, that it cannot be well conceived how they should come there without such a concussion."—*Dr. Shaw's Travels.*

The harbour, which was at the time of the French occupation almost filled up, has been dug and enlarged. There is a lighthouse on a reef of rocks which is connected with the mainland by a pier, and a jetty has been built on the seaward side, but the port is very little used.

The whole sea-front is covered with shapeless masses of ancient brickwork.

The barracks have been built round the grand mosque, which has been converted into a military hospital, and its roof is supported by eighty-nine granite columns, which formerly adorned various ancient buildings. The capitals are of all sizes and styles, and the bases embedded some feet in the ground. Here are also the old vaulted Roman cisterns, now repaired and restored to their original use.

Westward of the town, past the modern cemetery, a Roman burying-ground has been found, which has lately been opened under the direction of the Archbishop of Algiers, who is an ardent and intelligent antiquarian. He has also been at the expense of opening some rock sepulchres, lately discovered between Cherchel and Zurich, the investigation of which is still going on.

The most interesting ruin of Cherchel is to be found a few minutes' walk from the east gate—the Arena, where it is said, St. Severin and his wife St. Aquila were martyred. The road leads past an extremely quaint twin-domed mosque overlooking the sea, and the Roman circus is to be found on the opposite side of the way, behind a tiny walled-in cemetery.

The Arena is elliptical in form, and nearly as large as the Coliseum at Rome. It is now a corn-field, and the seats of the spectators are for the most part overgrown with a picturesque covering of wild-flowers, shrubs and creepers; but the form is still very perfect, and the tiers of seats rising one above another are clearly discernible. With this, as with the other ruins of Cæsarea, no pains have been taken to preserve it; but the very neglect with which it is treated, the unkempt wildness of its surroundings, the fact of the old scene of barbarous mirth and cruelty being ploughed up for a patch of Kabyle corn-field, the wealth of innocent wild-flowers that throw a veil over the ruins of the torn old walls, the half amused and half contemptuous gaze of the scantily-clad Kabyle women, who dart out from their huts to marvel over the queer tastes of the wandering Christian, and to jabber unintelligibly at him—above all the delightful colouring of land and sea and sky—all combine to make a scene

as touching and photographic to the memory, as any to be found in this entrancing land.

Cherchel was occupied by the French in 1840, in consequence of a French trading-vessel having been seized by the natives.

During the insurrection of 1871, it was completely cut off from the landward side for the space of a month, the aqueducts which supplied it with water being broken down, and the inhabitants reduced to their supply stored up in the old Roman cisterns. Dr. Shaw wrote in his "Travels" (1730)—

"As Shershell is shut up in the midst of mountains and narrow defiles, all communication may be easily cut off, whenever the neighbouring tribes are apt to be mutinous and troublesome, as frequently happens, even to this day."

"This day" is found to apply to the nineteenth as well as it did to the eighteenth century. In the cemetery are the graves of several officers and soldiers, who fell in the defence of the town in 1871.

CHAPTER XXVII.

MILIANAH.—HAMMAM RIRA.—TENIET-EL-HAD.—THE CEDAR-FOREST.

"This is the forest primeval."
Evangeline.

THE direct route to Milianah from Algiers or Blidah is by rail to Affreville, an omnibus to Milianah meeting every train at that station; or it may be combined with the carriage excursion from Blidah to Cherchel, &c., Milianah being about twenty-eight miles from Cherchel, the road branching off to it at Bourkika, a village about three miles from Marengo. At Bourkika is a comfortable though homely little inn.

By this means the interesting baths of Hammam Rira may be visited *en route*, and if from Milianah an excursion be made to Teniet-el-Had and its cedar-forest, all the places of interest west of Blidah may easily be included in a week's tour by carriage from that place.

The Hammam Rira may also be made a separate excursion by railway to Vesoul-Benian, from which village they are not more than two miles distant across the valley, and from whence an omnibus meets the trains.

These are, perhaps, the most important of the many mineral springs of Algeria, and are probably destined to

play an important part in the future history of the colony, as they did in the old time of Roman domination, when the now deserted site was the summer rendezvous of the wealthy inhabitants of Cæsarea, Tipasa, and the other large cities. Here we may imagine the Roman youth gossiped and flirted and whiled away the idle hours in the luxurious bath; and the old Romans nursed their gout and rheumatism after the manner of visitors to a modern spa, for this was the famous Aquæ Calidæ, celebrated throughout the empire as a health-resort, and said to contain a population of two hundred thousand inhabitants!

The ruins of the vast city, half overgrown with wild-flowers, still strew the hill from which the healing waters bubble up unsparingly as of old; but the wealth and fashion of early Rome are supplanted by a fever-detachment of French soldiers, a goodly number of sick Jews, and a crowd of Arabs, who, unlike their European companions in the bath, frequent the waters in great numbers all through the winter. One basin is entirely devoted to their use, the women taking precedence, and the men using the same water afterwards, and the ablutions are not, it would seem, regarded as merely sanitary, since we are told—

"Mondays and Tuesdays are the great days for them to bathe, as they believe that Sidi-Sliman, the Prince of Gins, is invoked on those days more successfully than during the remainder of the week, and more effectually by night than by day. Their custom is to rub their bodies over with leeks when in the bath, and the women put incense into papers, which they burn and throw into the water, uttering loud cries of 'Lou, lou, lou,' all the while to the Gins. They also place small dolls at the margin of the bath, with thirty or forty small candles burning round, to make Sidi-Sliman understand that they desire offspring, and they endeavour to attract his attention by deafening shouts, kept up till late at night.

"The charge for being allowed to indulge in these rites is only a penny, but the bathers often give eggs in lieu of money payment."—*Scenes in the Sunny South.*

These superstitious observances have evident reference to the tradition held among the natives, as to the origin of the hot springs. Solomon the Magnificent, they say, set the genii, over whom he ruled as well as over men, to work beneath the earth, to boil water for his bath. These genii happened to be both deaf and blind, and thus, unacquainted with the events which have occurred since their task began, and of the lapse of time, they still continue their preparations for the great Sultan's toilette.

There are at Hammam Rira, besides the military establishment, two large baths attached to the hotel, all built out of Roman ruins.

These erections occupy three sides of a large quadrangle. On the fourth is a trellis-covered terrace, from which a charming view is obtained over the rich valley of the Hammam, the horizon bounded by the Atlas in front, and the peak of the Zakkar to the right.

The baths as a place of resort for visitors, are yet in their infancy, and Murray pronounces "the civil establishment to be in a very unsatisfactory condition." But Colonel Vereker, who seems to have made some stay at Hammam in 1871, says àpropos of this—

"There is a small dressing-room, and all the arrangements are excellent. I found the baths very agreeable, but the water is so exciting that it is unwise to stay in longer than twenty minutes at the outside." —*Scenes in the Sunny South.*

The hot springs, many of which are not utilized, are very numerous, and of various temperatures; one at the top of the old Roman town being so hot that the hand cannot be

held in it, and on the rock through which it rises, eggs can be cooked. The differing temperature of the springs is explained by Dr. Lelorrain, to be owing to the passage of the water through various strata to the surface.

"They are probably from the primary stratum, and from the enormous quantity of water which they furnish, must cover a very large area. They spring from a fount of sweet water, and after having traversed the bed of tertiary stratum, they reach the surface of the soil by natural fissures. During their subterranean course, they lose a part of their original heat, and assume the temperature of the more superficial strata through which they pass, or of the atmosphere. It is also during their passage across strata filled with mineral salts, that they acquire their medicinal virtues."

The mineral waters of Hammam Rira do not all possess the same medicinal properties; some are saline and some ferruginous. The former are found specially useful in cases of rheumatism and cutaneous diseases; the latter are said to have a marvellous effect upon constitutions enfeebled by fever, diarrhœa, dysentery, &c.

Most of the springs now in use are believed to have forced their way to the surface, since the days of Aquæ Calidæ. They are constantly changing their volume, and at times, when volcanic action is felt in other parts of the country, become violently agitated, throw up sand and mud, and take a most decided odour of sulphur. At other times they are uncoloured, clear, and extremely limpid. Their odour, which in repose is scarcely to be perceived, becomes nauseous if the water is shaken. The thermal springs, which contain principally sulphates, chlorides, and carbonates of soda, magnesia, and lime, leave a white deposit, which hardens and takes the appearance of plaster. The hills are scored by white lines left by the passage of the waters. This crust condenses very rapidly, and is apt to

take the form of any object which it may encounter, so as to form a kind of petrifaction.

There is no fresh spring-water in all this neighbourhood, water for drinking having to be brought from a chalybeate spring a mile off. It is slightly effervescent, resembling Seltzer water. Among the hot springs is one on the route to Milianah, which is reserved for cattle, and is visited by numbers of sick mules and asses.

The ruins of the Roman town, destroyed, according to tradition, by an earthquake, are very extensive, covering the entire slope of the mountain above the baths and the gorge eastward, through which the little Oued flows amid giant oleanders. The whole country round is excessively wild and undulating, the hills thickly wooded with lentisk, pine, juniper, and myrtle, and the ground in the spring a mass of variegated colour, with marigolds, scarlet anemone, blue pimpernel, and orchises of every shade. The ruins consist for the most part of shapeless masses of brickwork and stone, amid which are scattered broken columns, cornices, and capitals, but the circuit of the fortified walls is very distinct, and there are remains of temples, towers, and other buildings which can be distinguished. A large number of stone coffins are to be met with, outside the old walls.

Some of the ruins have been excavated by order of the French military authorities, and a little museum of curiosities found on the spot, has been established in the hotel garden.

The air of Hammam Rira is pure and sweet, the temperature equal, and even in summer, it is said, that the sea-breezes, carried over the plain, bring morning and evening

a certain freshness which tempers the heat. The situation is altogether so beautiful, and the waters apparently of such value medicinally, that it is not difficult to prophesy for the spa, a revival of some of its ancient glories.

The road from Vesoul-Benian to Milianah is through a wild and rugged country, and the approach to Milianah is very striking, the road crossing and recrossing the river many times, the town being entered through an avenue of poplars, which, with its red-tiled houses, makes it, says one traveller, look like a toy-town taken out of a box.

It is situated at a height of 2,500 feet above the sea, on the Zakkar Mountain, and is a strongly fortified town, being protected on the south and east by precipitous crags and steep slopes, and on the other side by high walls. The country all round it is very fertile, and gives the idea of a well-watered garden.

Hôtel d'Isly—very good.

From the ramparts there is a superb view towards Medeah, which is seen glistening, a line of white on the mountain side far away; and across the plain of the Chelif to the Ouarensensis, the highest peak of the lesser Atlas, which is usually snow-covered, and forms a landmark all over the country. But beyond the beauty of its situation there is remarkably little in Milianah to attract the stranger. It possesses a history dating from the Roman times, but almost every trace of ancient and mediæval occupation has been destroyed, many of the Roman remains having been used in the construction of the fortifications. It is now an ordinary French town, the straight streets of which are bordered with plane-trees, and have streams of water

running through them. Of the twenty-five mosques which it once possessed, only one remains.

It was at one time occupied by Abd-el-Kader, who made it, for awhile, his capital. It was taken possession of by the French in 1840, who found it nothing but a heap of smoking ruins, it having been fired by the Arabs on their retreat.

The most interesting incident in the history of Milianah, is the relief of the town by General Changarnier during the war with Abd-el-Kader in June, 1840.

"Of all the points which we have occupied in Africa, Milianah is, perhaps, the town where our soldiers have undergone the greatest trials. Many a scene of despair has been enacted on this narrow platform, but all who survived, never relate their sufferings without mentioning the name of General Changarnier, who was twice their saviour. In June, 1840, the army was with Marshal Valée before the walls of Medeah. Milianah, which had been only a short time occupied by our columns, had to be revictualled. The generals were not agreed in opinion; the undertaking appeared at that moment too difficult and the troops too fatigued. Colonel Changarnier alone believed the thing possible, and the Marshal confided without hesitation, the conduct of the expedition to one, who had just taken so brilliant a share in the storming of the Col de Mouzaïa. The next day the Colonel started. Concealing his march from the observation of the enemy, he advanced twenty-four leagues in thirty hours. Four days afterwards he returned. The complete success of the expedition had justified the confidence of the old Marshal, and Colonel Changarnier received the congratulations of the whole army.

"The hot season having begun, the troops had returned to their cantonments. The Governor calculated that the assistance thus left in the station, would enable the garrison to wear on till the revictualling at the end of autumn, but he had not foreseen the sickness with which they were visited, nor the depredations of the vermin, penetrating into the dilapidated storehouses and destroying part of their resources. The oxen were dead, it was impossible to pass beyond the ramparts, there was no more meat, and famine was beginning to declare itself. Pressed by hunger, the soldiers ate whatever they could pick up, devouring even grass and mallows. Out of twelve hundred men, seven

hundred and fifty had already perished, four hundred were in the hospital, and the remainder in little better condition. Scarcely had the small remnant of the able men, strength to hold their muskets. The officers were obliged themselves to perform watch on the ramparts, and every day the fatal hour seemed to be approaching, when the town would be taken for want of hands to defend it. No letters, no intelligence of any kind, reached the garrison; their spies had been killed. At last a despatch from the commander was received at Algiers, giving information of the fearful position of the town. Colonel Changarnier, who since the first victualling of Milianah had become a general, had by fresh successes increased his reputation for skill and daring. Accordingly, to him, Marshal Valée again resorted to save the garrison. Only two thousand men could be spared him. With these inadequate resources he had to advance through a country replete with extreme difficulties, in the teeth of the Emir, Abd-el-Kader, whose power at that time, had barely yet been shaken. The General betrayed no hesitation. The more dangerous the enterprise, the greater glory in success. Should he fail, it would at any rate be with the consciousness of not having shrunk from duty. Accordingly he set out with this handful of men, and proclaiming that an expedition to revictual Medea was about to be made, succeeded in withdrawing his march from the observation of the enemy; and, finally making his way through all the surrounding multitudes, reached the unfortunate garrison at Milianah in time to save the small number of survivors. They were but eighty." —*Castellane's Vie Militaire.*

The koubba of Sidi Mohammed-ben-Yousef, the celebrated saint of Milianah, is worthy a visit, and the environs of the town are extremely pretty.

Milianah has the reputation of being a very healthy place.

TENIET-EL-HAD, with its magnificent cedar-forest, is an excursion by no means to be omitted from the programme of the Algerine traveller; only, unless he have a special predilection for snow-storms, and be robust enough not to mind them, he should postpone his visit until the fine weather has thoroughly set in. The middle of April is about the earliest time, under ordinary circumstances, when

a journey to Teniet would be agreeable. Teniet may be reached direct from Algiers or Blidah by train to Affreville. Thence a diligence every other day in eight hours (8 fr.), a distance of forty miles.

[Affreville is a village so named from the Archbishop of Paris, who was shot at the barricades in June, 1848. It is, from its position, likely to become an important centre, and it is probable that it will be the junction of projected railways to Boghar and other places south. The streets are planted with rows of pepper-trees. It was the site of a Roman station, the name of which is uncertain. Good buffet at the railway station.]

The drive from Milianah as far as Affreville, through orchards of figs, pomegranates, and olives, with constant views of Milianah perched above on its rocky height, is charming. Beyond Affreville the route passes across the plain of the Chelif, which is crossed by a ford when the state of the river permits, or by a ferry. A bridge is projected.

The plain of the Chelif has almost all the characteristics of the Metidja; rich, flat, and swampy, it has proved itself equally fatal to the colonist, and yet holds out the same promise, when brought under cultivation, of wealth and prosperity. It is being abundantly planted with the life-giving eucalyptus.

A thoroughly good road winds up from the plain, following the course of the stream Oued Massin, through a pretty and wooded country which gradually becomes wilder.

The caravansary of Anseur-el-louza, almost the half-way house, is beautifully situated on open ground, surrounded by fine woods of oak and pine. Here travellers may breakfast. The place is a favourite resort of sportsmen, as the thickets of the neighbourhood abound with partridges and

rabbits, while hyænas, jackals, and wild-boars are frequently met with.

Not far from this is a salt-stream, from which the natives have from time immemorial obtained supplies of this useful domestic article. It is chiefly collected by women, who scrape the saline deposit from the rocks.

Following the windings of the mountain streamlet which it crosses and recrosses, and passing through a picturesque glen, which, but for its foliage of tamarisk and carouba trees, and the oleander-crowded bed of the river, might almost be a choice bit of Welsh scenery, the road mounts upwards in the direction of Teniet.

Until very recently this road was a deplorably bad one, and it was hard to say which suffered most during its course, the unhappy occupants of the carriage or the wretched horses which had to drag their load over rocks and through quagmires. In 1871, Colonel Vereker tells us how he, his carriage and horses literally and actually stuck in the mud, and had to be dragged out by main force! Since then the military road to Teniet has been completed, and the excitement and perils of the journey are so far lessened, but after heavy rains it is still very bad.

One very striking feature of the Algerine high-roads, is the small encampment of road-makers or menders, which is met with every now and then—*cantonniers* as they are called, and who seem to have a solitary life of it, as they are often the only beings passed for miles together. They are throughout the province either negroes or Spaniards, for curiously enough, as it seems, the Spaniard, who is so utterly averse to work in his own country, is found a most active labourer, though, perhaps, not a very honest one, in Africa. Most of the

crimes committed in the colony, thefts, and so on, are laid to the charge of the Spaniards, but whether this is a national prejudice it is hard to say. They form at least a very important body. The negroes as road-menders are decidedly the most striking objects, and as they sit by the roadside in their bright-coloured garments, hammer in hand, leisurely knocking away at the stones, their black skins thrown well up against the white of the road and the hedgerows of vivid green, they seem almost to be set down in the exact spots where they are found, by a beneficent arranger of picturesque effects, as startling studies of colour.

On the road to Teniet a curiously isolated hill, called "the sugar-loaf," is passed. It rises up in solitary grandeur out of the brushwood, its base scattered with huge fragments of rock, probably shattered by the same upheaval to which it owes its existence. The mountains round are rugged, and many of them bare, with walls of slaty-black rock like dismantled ramparts.

Teniet-el-Had, or the market of Sundays, is a bleak little village nearly 4,000 feet above the level of the sea, and it is seldom that the traveller coming from the sunny plains and hills of the Sahel, will visit it without vaunting as its chief merit the blazing and fragrant cedar-logs, which it is to be hoped he will find awaiting him on the inn hearth.

Hotels.—Du Commerce, good. The others very indifferent.

The excursion to the cedar-forest can be accomplished in a carriage, but the road is so very bad, that this mode of progression will probably be found the most fatiguing that could well be selected. Mules or horses are to be hired,

and the officers of the military-train maintain the character of national courtesy, by affording every possible assistance to foreigners, who may visit their lonely hill station. No side-saddles are to be obtained, the only feminine accommodation being a kind of iron pannier fitted with a footboard, which, when the mules walk, after their custom, at the edge of the mountain-path, gives a most unpleasant sensation to the rider of sitting completely over the precipice. A lady would do well to take her own saddle with her to Teniet.

The start to the cedars should be made early, if any of the beauties of the forest are to be explored, and the best lights had for the views. Besides which it is not desirable to linger too late in the forest. Provisions must be taken.

A tolerably steep mount of about an hour and a half, leads to the outskirts of the forest, with ever-extending views of the surrounding country as the path winds upwards and upwards. The first cedars, which are eagerly looked for among a wood of evergreen oaks, are small and stunted, but as the higher ground is reached, they increase in grandeur and beauty, spreading out their stately branches over many yards, and rising in their giant growth to a height of from sixty to a hundred feet.

"La Sultane," the largest tree in the forest, has a diameter of nine feet, while under its branches, it is said, a hundred and twenty horsemen could shelter from the sun. The "Sultan," now fallen, was even larger.

The sun shining upon the snow-covered ground through the dark cedar-branches has a marvellous effect, and the whole scene in its wildness, and *greatness*, and utter stillness, is most impressive, heightened not a little, perhaps, by the

scarred and ruined trunks—the result of the incendiarism or carelessness of the Arabs—which in so many places strew the ground, and the corpse-like trees which raise to heaven their gaunt and skeleton forms, as though in mute and suffering protest, against the fate to which they refuse to

Cedars of Teniet.

yield. Everywhere into the solemn silent scene, the presence of the great destroyer is obtruded, and with it an impression of suffering and struggle for life, which makes us feel an almost human sympathy with the tortured monarchs of the wood.

The snow is sometimes so deep as to render a visit to

the forest impracticable, or at least adventurous; but these difficulties are, as a rule, considered by travellers rather to add a zest to the enjoyment of the way than to mar it.

"We had the *good luck* to come in for a snow-storm among the cedars," says one writer, "and were nearly frozen"—a very good commentary on the old saw that pleasure feels no pain.

But the truth is, that many persons make these excursions too early in the year for any real comfort, and it should be well borne in mind, that every month in the spring not only decreases difficulties, but adds to the beauty of the scene a hundred-fold, so far as the vegetation is concerned.

Beyond what is known as the *Rond Point* and past the "Sultane," the traveller who does not object to climbing should mount to the bare ridge above, since from this point a grand view is to be had on a clear day, a perfect panorama extending over the Tell on one side, and over the far-stretching desert on the other, with the long dim outline of the "Montagnes-bleues" barring the horizon, and between this infinite expanse and the mountains, a region half-cultivated and half-wooded, known by the poetical name of the *Sersou*—the twilight—the undecided.

In front of the spectator rises the great mass of the Ouarensensis, "the eye of the world," and northward, a succession of ridges and valleys, stretching away past the valley of the Chelif to Milianah, and even to the Sahel.

There are some mineral springs in the forest, the principal one of which is ferruginous, and said greatly to resemble the waters of Spa. In the military club at

Teniet is a cedar-wood table, made from one of the forest trees, six feet in diameter, and having (says Col. Vereker), "five hundred and six rings which can be counted from the centre towards the circumference, each corresponding to a year of the tree's age, beyond which, the marks become too indistinct to count, so that it is impossible to say how much older than five centuries, the giant may have been."

The return from Teniet, except by a mule-path over the mountains to Boghar, must be made in the same way, to Affreville, whence train to Algiers or carriage (one day) to Blidah.

The road passes at the foot of the lesser Atlas all the way through the plain, taking in its course the villages of Bou-Medfa, El-Affroun, and Mouzaïville, the last two having been rebuilt since the earthquake of 1867, which completely destroyed Mouzaïville, and in El-Affroun left standing one house only, out of the hundred of which it was composed.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

KABYLIA.—FORT NATIONAL.—THE PORTES-DE-FER.

> "Then slowly climb the many-winding way,
> And frequent turn to linger as you go,
> From loftier rocks new loveliness survey."
>
> *Childe Harold.*

THE name of Kabylia has been given by the French to that great mountainous quadrangle, enclosed within the four points of Dellys, Bougie, Setif, and Aumale, lying half within the province of Algiers, and half in that of Constantine. The nomenclature is arbitrary, since, although this region is undoubtedly the head-quarters of the Kabyle race, the other mountainous districts of Algeria are equally inhabited by people of Berber origin, the Kabyles of the mountains between Milianah and Cherchel, being as much Kabyles as though born on the Djurdjura.

By an expedition into Kabylia is generally meant however, a visit to Fort National, or to the Portes-de-fer on the road to Constantine.

Dellys and Bougie, the ports of Kabylia, are, as a rule, visited only by those who take a coasting voyage from Algiers to Philippeville (for Constantine) or to Bone. Dellys, though a picturesque town in the midst of delightful orchards and gardens, has no special attractions for the traveller; and Bougie, though beautifully situated and

interesting from its various ancient buildings and ruins, unfortunately possesses no good accommodation, the hotel being (to quote Murray) "the dirtiest in Algeria." Bougie was at one time a very important seaport, and its possession was therefore an object of envy. It has been occupied by every race, from the Carthaginians downwards, who have settled in North Africa, and was successfully held by the Spaniards against the Barbarossa brothers. The forts are the most interesting ancient buildings in the town, and in the neighbourhood are many Roman remains. The ancient walls and fortifications were rebuilt by the Spaniards, as Latin inscriptions on some of the forts testify.

Bougie, from its large export of wax, is said to have given the French name to candles, a circumstance which will not bring it greatly into favour with the traveller frequenting continental hotels, where he will always have found the word to be a synonym for petty, and therefore possibly vexatious, extortion.

[The steamers for Philippeville and La Calle, which call at these ports (allowing their passengers a few hours for landing and seeing the latter), leave Algiers every Wednesday at 2 P.M. (Valery & Co.), and every Tuesday at 8 P.M. (Navigation Mixte).]

This part of Kabylia, which is known by the French as *La Petite Kabylie*, is of very much less interest in every way than the mountainous Djurdjura country, which they term *La Grande Kabylie*, and which, until conquered by the French in 1857, had preserved its independence intact for an unnumbered course of centuries.

In the midst of this grandly beautiful and interesting region, is the French citadel now known as Fort National. It is about eighty miles from Algiers, and diligences run

there every other day in fifteen hours. It need scarcely be said that a carriage is preferable.

[A carriage with three horses and relays (three days only being occupied in the journey) costs about 200 fr. In this arrangement the travellers would sleep both nights at Tizi-Ouzou. An excursion of four days is preferable, one night being spent at Fort National. It is a pleasant and cheap way of making the trip, to take the diligence to Tizi-Ouzou, and next day hire horses or mules to the Fort.]

As the expedition is entirely among the mountains, it should not be undertaken until the spring is well advanced and the weather settled.

"I think," writes the author of "A Winter with the Swallows," "one must travel to Fort Napoléon before understanding what a north wind can be." This was in March, and March is decidedly too early for La Grande Kabylie. The route is by Maison Carrée (Chapter XXII.) and La Rassauta, across the plain of the Metidja, in which lies Alma (Hôtel d'Orient), a prosperous village, where a great victory was at the time of the conquest, gained by a handful of French troops over a large number of Arabs.

As the plain is crossed, the backward view of the Sahel is very fine, while immediately in front of the traveller rise, the whole way along the route, only looming larger and larger as they are more nearly approached, the magnificent snow peaks of the Djurdjura. The road from Algiers to Tizi-Ouzou is almost a straight line.

Thirty-two miles from Algiers the Oued Kerso, a stream which forms the boundary of Kabylia, is passed. Some four miles further on, is the koubba of a Bey of Tittery in the sixteenth century. The name by which he is known is not flattering to his character. It is Mahommed-el-Dibbah

—the murderer. Query, was he so much worse than the rest, that his name has thus been branded to posterity, or was it only a matter of ill-luck?

Some forty miles from Algiers is the Col des Beni Aïcha, 500 feet above the level of the sea, where the road to Constantine branches off. Here are two inns—Blanchard, and Du Roulage—fairly comfortable.

This being, as it were, the key to Kabylia, is a most important station. The district, until the last insurrection, was inhabited by a very large native population, but in consequence of their violent conduct at that time, their lands have been taken from them, they are being scattered in various parts of the country, and their places supplied for the most part, with refugees from Alsace and Lorraine.

When the French conquered the Kabyles they certainly treated them—after submission was made—with considerable clemency. They left them undisturbed in the possession of their property, and in no way interfered with the internal government, by which for many centuries they had regulated their own affairs.

Their valiant resistance to the invader, their industrious and orderly habits, recommended them to their conquerors, who were apt to contrast the good qualities of these hardy mountaineers with the laziness and treachery of the Arabs.

"The Kabyle or Berber is the pet of the French community in Algeria. Whenever you hear an intelligent politician discussing the relative qualities of Arab and Kabyle, you are reminded of some stern schoolmaster, awarding whacks to the bad boy and cakes to the good.

"'There is no comparison,' say they, 'between the Arab and the Kabyle. The Kabyle builds houses, plants trees, tills the ground, and is a monogamist. The Kabyle woman is really a woman, and not a

piece of furniture or a beast of burden, as with the Arab. In a hundred years the Kabyle will be a Frenchman,' &c. &c. Here and there one meets with some one inclined to do justice to the Arab, but it is generally the Kabyle who gets all the pudding."—*A Winter with the Swallows.*

The *enfant gâté* of the French conquest however, turned out, as spoiled children are apt to do, somewhat too much for those who had the bringing up of him.

In the insurrection of 1871, which was almost entirely confined to the Kabyles, nothing could exceed the brutality, with which they treated all the unhappy colonists who fell into their hands, or the bad faith they showed, to those who were compelled to surrender to them. The whole of this route was the scene of desperate struggles, between handfuls of French people and large masses of the natives, and every village could tell its tale of massacre and outrage.

The defile of Beni Aïcha was one of the great centres of the insurrection; the village of Alma made a gallant defence, and was subsequently relieved, although all the outlying farmsteads were burnt and their inhabitants murdered, but Beni Aïcha was entirely destroyed. It has since been rebuilt on a larger scale, with a small fortress in case of future need.

At this point the Djurdjura range of snow-capped peaks comes fully into view.

Five miles further, along a flat and uninteresting road, is the village of Les Issers, near the river of the same name. Here is the Souk-el-Djemäa (market of Friday) with a large caravansary—not to be recommended.

A few unimportant villages and collections of native *gourbis*, hidden away behind cactus-screens, are the only

habitations to be met with, but the country becomes gradually wilder and more interesting. From level plains, tenanted chiefly, it would seem, by storks and cranes, the road, continually ascending, passes into a hilly country, and winds about the base of rugged weather-beaten mountains —over whose hoary crests the hawk and eagle will often be seen hovering—until at length the white walls of the Fort of Tizi-Ouzou come in sight. This fort, an old Turkish bordji built on Roman foundations, was occupied by the French in 1855, and was their frontier post until 1857, when the grand expedition into the Djurdjura was organized. At this time, indeed, the works of the fortifications of Tizi-Ouzou were scarcely completed, but it was here that the invading army of twenty-five thousand men under Marshal Randon, congregated in the May of that year, the plain or valley in which Tizi-Ouzou stands being, as an eye-witness tells us, covered with canvas, and the lonely frontier fort "the gayest spot in Algeria."

The situation of Tizi-Ouzou is peculiar. It is shut-in on all sides, or rather looks out upon a sea of mountains. Backwards, the rugged hills through which the traveller has passed bar the prospect; before him rise the towering Djurdjura; seawards another range of hills cuts the horizon; in the plain rises a sugar-loaf hill on which the fort is built, and up whose sides the village straggles. The French and Arab villages are still quite distinct.

The hotel—de la Poste—is anything but good, but the traveller bent on Kabylian expeditions must learn not to be too exacting; and it will be well if he do not omit to bring with him a certain supply of Keating's insect-powder—all the better for him if it chance not to be needed.

During the insurrection of 1871 Tizi-Ouzou was hotly besieged by the Kabyles, who entirely destroyed the village, the inhabitants taking refuge in the fort, which they managed to hold for three weeks, against an overwhelming native force. There is a service of diligences between Dellys and Tizi-Ouzou.

The road from this village to Fort National, about seventeen miles, which was constructed by the French army of invasion in as many days, is amid scenery as beautiful as it is possible to conceive, increasing with every mile in grandeur.

"The road wound round the mountains like a thread twisted about a sugar-loaf. We looked up and said, 'Oh! it is impossible that we can get there.' We looked down and said, 'Have we really climbed so high?' and still we climbed higher and higher and higher. Everywhere were signs of cultivation; and it was quite touching to see how laborious and often ineffectual, was the system of it."—*A Winter with the Swallows.*

Only a stretch of plain, and the wide but shallow river Sebaou, separate Tizi-Ouzou from the Djurdjura.

Immediately these are crossed, the road begins to wind upwards, at first among green hills rich with vegetation, and clothed with magnificent olives and figs; after awhile, still mounting, it crosses some of the higher spurs of the mountain-range, amid scenery grander and wilder, but equally verdant, each apparently inaccessible crag being crowned by its group of glistening stone cottages, its citadel village, each one of which was in the invasion of 1857 contested inch by inch, and was the scene of frightful carnage.

With regard to the luxuriant vegetation of their mountains, the Kabyles have a legend. It is said that "in the

beginning," the Djurdjura were sterile and rugged as any other of the African mountains, but that a certain holy man who lived among them, and noted the hard lives and patient industry of the Kabyles driven by oppression from the fruitful plains, prayed constantly that the curse of barrenness might be removed from the land. In answer to which prayer, Allah caused multitudes of starlings to come from all quarters of the world, bearing in their beaks seeds from every country they had visited, and as they winged their way over the mountains, they dropped the precious seed as they were commanded. One flight alone proved disobedient—that which brought the fig-seeds from the far East. These were so sweet to the taste, that the birds neglected to drop them on the mountains, but no sooner had they reached the plains, than the vultures and hawks fell upon the rebellious starlings and demolished them, the fig-seeds falling into the valleys.

"Anything more picturesque and poetic than the scenery of Grand Kabylia cannot be conceived. The lovely hills, purple, or green, or golden, as the light made them, each crowned with a compact mass of tiny stone houses; the deep valleys of tender green, the lofty rocks bristling with wild cactus, the groves of majestic olives, the distant panorama of blue snow-tipped mountains—all these features made a picture not easy to forget. . . .

"It was difficult to conceive what a different scene we should have traversed only a few years back. These mountain passes and lovely valleys were then alive with the sound of guns and the flash of swords, and few and far between were the villages which escaped the scourge of war. The Kabyles fought well, but the sight of their ruined crops and burning olive-woods, sooner than anything else inclined them to peace, and there seems no likelihood of its being again broken."—*A Winter with the Swallows.*

This was written in the year 1867. The *enfant gâté* had not then shown himself in the colours which he afterwards

assumed, and nothing is more extraordinary, than the blind reliance which the French showed, in the good faith or the impotence of the Kabyle population, before the insurrection, although for a long while they might, had they looked, have seen the storm brewing; and of the Kabyle tenacity and valour, too, they had had ample experience, in the wars in which the mountaineers had defeated them over and over again. Yet the security of the French seems to have been without suspicion, as we learn from Colonel Vereker, who travelled this road and over the wilder passes of the mountains in the spring of 1871, a month before the outbreak, and mentions Tazmalt, a lonely fort in the heart of the Djurdjura, which was actually destroyed in the revolt. It was then used as a prison.

"Most of the prisoners were made to work at collecting firewood and doing other jobs about the fort. The worst were sent into El-Bordj-Araridj, the chief fort of the district, where a company of zouaves were stationed, the only troops within available distance, as but eight men were quartered at Beni Mansour. Yet Rumbel, the commandant, ruled his twenty-eight thousand Kabyles and Arabs without fear, although his garrison consisted but of his clerk, a soldier-servant, a spahi, and a gardener who was away all day. When I expressed astonishment at the isolated position of the Fort, Rumbel assured me he never felt any apprehensions, as the matchlocks of the natives were worthless, and their sabres were so bad that they bent like old hoop-iron."—*Scenes in the Sunny South.*

The drive from Tizi-Ouzou (the gorge of the broom-plant) to Fort National takes about four hours, during quite one hour of which the fortress is in full view, first as a tiny white speck on the mountain, and gradually, as it is neared, developing itself into the walled and fortressed town.

Fort National (originally called Fort Napoléon, and by the natives *Souk-el-Arba*, or the market of Wednesdays) is

situated 3,153 feet above the level of the sea, commanding a magnificent view on every side.

It was built, and in five months completed, by the French army during the campaign of 1857, the first stone being laid by Marshal Randon on the 14th of June, the anniversary of the landing of the French in Algiers. An incident extremely creditable to the French must be related of the foundation of this fortress. On the proposed site was a small Kabyle village, conquered shortly before. When it was decided to erect the fort, Marshal Randon called the chiefs of the village, and offered them either a similar grant of land, and assistance in rebuilding their houses, or a sum of money. The Kabyles prudently compounded for a sum of 25,000 francs, and retired with good grace.

The building of this fortress and the construction of the road leading to it, were certainly some of the most remarkable achievements of the French in Algeria, both being accomplished in the actual face of the yet unconquered enemy. An eye-witness relates—

"Their muskets slung over their shoulders, a grey-coloured kind of blouse replacing the usual uniform, the men work on by groups. All labour with the greatest ardour, for the enemy is in front, and seventy-five kilomètres of road have to be got through, before the order to advance will be given.

"The road was traced out on the 2nd of June, and on the 3rd the spade and pickaxe began their work. Not only the men of the purely French regiments and those of the foreign legion, but even those of the native corps, unused as they were to work, placed the shoulder to the wheel, while groups of Kabyles sat hour after hour in solemn gravity, contemplating the work, and wondering what sudden madness had seized on the Roumi foe. Great was their astonishment at what they conceived to be the cowardice of the Christians, for this road appeared to them to be made only to secure the retreat of the invader. The work was one of great difficulty, for not only had dense and almost

impenetrable underwood to be traversed, not only had forests of trees to be cut down, but miles of solid rock had to be blasted and cut through, and hills had to be removed and thrown down into the ravines, filling them up to make a passage for the road.

"Winding in and out, always mounting upwards, the line of road soon became sufficiently marked to allow of the passage of mules and donkeys; and now long strings of them daily mounted from the plains, conveying the materials for building and the provisions for the camp. On the 22nd of the same month the road was finished, and the marshal commanding, followed by a brilliant staff, rode down it in all its length. All along the way the soldier-workmen were drawn up by regiments or companies, spade and pick were laid by, and neat and clean as on a review day, each party occupied the ground which had been allotted it as the scene of its labours.

"The line of telegraph too had been laid and was at work; and thus not only was the rear secured, not only was a broad, fine road opened into the very heart of the hitherto unconquered country, but the new Fort Napoléon, whose walls were barely rising from the soil, was placed in direct telegraphic communication with the capital. The marshal looked very proud of his men, and as his eye glanced over mile after mile of the new road, and over company after company of his army, and as the large roughly-cut letters in the solid rock of the Kabyle mountains met his glance, he smiled as he read the words which some regimental wags had placed here and there—'High-road between Paris and the Fort Napoléon.'"—*Col. Walmsley's Sketches of the Kabyle War.*

Fort National is a town rather than a mere fortress. Within its sheltering walls are gathered all the European population to be found in this wild and lonely region. The number of European inhabitants is given in the last census as 187; the native population of the commune—that is to say of the neighbouring district—as 95,219.

The inequality is somewhat suggestive, and we are not therefore surprised to hear, that in the insurrection Fort Napoléon was a special point of attack. The little garrison was so far removed from help or hope of relief, that but small chance seemed left them. With admirable courage,

however, they supported a siege of over two months, and were finally relieved by the French army of succour from Algiers. There are two or three hotels, or rather small inns, in the fort, unpretending but clean: Hôtel des Touristes; Hôtel de l'Europe.

Several excursions may be made from Fort National:—to Icheriden, on its natural fortress, where the Beni Menguillet, the most warlike of the Kabyle tribes, kept the whole French army at bay, and which was then practically inaccessible, but to which now a good road leads. Beyond the village a road has also been opened out, passing by the Col de Tirouda, one of the highest points of the mountain-range, through a most interesting country, covered with populous Kabyle villages. Some fourteen miles from the fort, the village of Kouko will be seen on the height to the left. This, which, according to M. MacCarthy, represents the Roman Turaphilum, was a city of great account in the Middle Ages. Indeed Marmol, in the sixteenth century, speaks of it as the capital of a kingdom; and Laugier de Tassy, so late as the eighteenth, mentions it as a place of importance, but scarcely any ruins remain to attest its former greatness.

Near the Col de Tirouda, was captured during the Kabyle campaign, the famous female marabout Lalla Fatimah, whose preachings and influence had been powerful incentives to the patriotic resistance of the tribes.

Seven miles south of Fort National, on the left side of the river, is the large village of Ait-el-Ahsen, where, it is said, much of the Kabyle jewellery exposed for sale in Algiers, and in use among the women, is made. It is invariably worked n silver or some white metal, and

thickly studded with small turquoises and pieces of coral.

The Kabyles, unlike the Arabs, are clever artificers, and are indeed so generally honest, hardworking, and ingenious, as to merit in a great measure the favour which their European conquerors showed them. Another branch of industry

Kabyle Woman.

in which they excel after their own peculiar style, is pottery, very beautiful specimens of which may be bought in the little shop at Fort National for almost nothing, and some few pieces in the bazaars of Algiers at a very considerably advanced price. The great objection to the traveller making a large collection of the Kabyle pottery is its weight.

It is very rough, moulded only with the hand—the work of the women—scarcely any two pieces being alike. In colouring there is little variety, the ware being all of an ochreous shade of yellow, patterned with black and rich dark red; but the shapes of the vessels, which form the chief furniture as well as ornament of the Kabyle huts, are very varied and beautiful, the most curious perhaps being the double, triple, and quadruple vases with a like number of handles, and of almost Etruscan shape.

The manufacture of firearms, beautifully inlaid and ornamented with jewels, was also at one time a special industry among the Kabyles. Since the disarming of the tribes, the manufacture has naturally been discontinued, and fine specimens of Kabyle workmanship are now rare.

About eight miles north-east of Fort National, is the Kabyle village of Djema Saridji—the market of the fountain. Here are a great number of Roman remains, and M. MacCarthy has decided the site to be that of the ancient Bida Colonia. The village is most delightfully situated in the midst of a perfect garden of figs, olives, and walnut-trees. The road to it is somewhat bare and dreary.

Mule tracks over the mountains, often impassable from snow or flood, lead from Fort National to Beni Mansour and Bordj-bou-Arreredj, on the route to Constantine, but good roads are in course of construction.

Without doubt the excursion to Fort National is the easiest, and indeed, taking it altogether, the most interesting expedition to be made into the wonderful Kabylia country, but there is also a high-road, begun in 1871, completely through the mountains, by which the diligences pass to and from Algiers to Constantine.

This route, following the same course as that to Fort National as far as the Col of Beni Aïcha, turns off from thence by Palestro and the famous *Portes-de-fer* to Bordj-bou-Arreredj and Setif, and so on to Constantine.

It is a very long, fatiguing, and, in many parts, uninteresting journey, while parts of it again are wild and magnificent in the extreme.

[The diligence leaves Algiers every day at 11 A.M. The whole journey to Constantine occupies about fifty-six hours, a night being passed on the road at Bordj-bou-Arreredj. By this means the Grande Porte is passed through, but the traveller by diligence does not have the chance of seeing the Petite Porte, which is the more curious and beautiful of the two.

In a carriage, an expedition to the Portes could be made in a week, the following being the best division of distances, and the start each day being made very early in the morning, so as to divide the journey into two parts, with a rest of some hours between :—

1st day.—From Algiers to Palestro, the mid-day rest being taken at Beni Aïcha.

2nd day.—From Palestro to Bordj Bouïra, resting at the caravansary of Oued Djemaa.

3rd day.—From Bordj Bouïra to Beni Mansour, the mid-day halt being made either at Ain-el-Smaan or Adjiba.

4th day.—The distance between Beni Mansour to the Portes-de-fer is only about thirteen miles, and both the Portes can easily be visited on the same day, another night being passed at Beni Mansour, and the return journey made in the same way, or a diversion made from Bordj Bouïra to Aumale, and so back to Algiers.

It is well for travellers making this expedition to provide themselves with a certain amount of tinned provisions, as food is sometimes scarce at the caravansaries. And for the expedition from Beni Mansour to the Portes, lunch must be taken, including water, as none is to be met with on the route fit for drinking.

Another, and decidedly the cheapest way of visiting the Portes would be to take the diligence as far as Beni Mansour (twenty-four hours by diligence from Algiers) and thence hire mules and a guide.]

An exquisite drive of some fourteen miles, leads from the junction-point of Beni Aïcha to Palestro. The road passes

through the magnificent gorge of the Isser, a mere rent in the mountains with steep rocky sides covered with luxuriant vegetation, surmounted by numerous quaint Kabyle villages, and watered by various cascades, falling from a great height into the river Isser, which flows at the bottom of the ravine. The gorge is much frequented by monkeys. Just opposite the seventy-second kil. stone is the entrance to an extensive cavern in the face of the rock, said to be worth exploring, and the path to it easy.

At one point of the road the rocks have been cut through, so as to form a tunnel eighty yards in length. The traveller, as he plunges into the tunnel, should observe the curious figures on the roof, which the winter rains have cut in it, and which have the appearance of rude sculptures.

PALESTRO.—Forty-five miles from Algiers. Hôtel de France, indifferent.

This village has acquired a melancholy celebrity by the events of 1871.

It then contained an European population of one hundred and twelve persons, chiefly collected for the construction of the road to Constantine. The place was unfortified, and situated between two powerful native tribes, one Arab and the other Kabyle, which had long given signs of disaffection. Yet the Europeans, although they heard of risings in other parts of the country, seem to have anticipated no possible danger, until the time when they found themselves actually surrounded, and their village invested by large bodies of hostile and excited natives.

M. Bassetti, the mayor, to whose extraordinary want of foresight the whole tragedy may perhaps be attributed, since he had disregarded the warnings of some friendly natives,

then took measures with the other inhabitants for defence. They retired into three houses, considered best able to withstand a siege—the priest's house, the gendarmerie, and the road-makers' house; the three, though separate from one another, formed a kind of triangle. These they strengthened in the best manner they could, and here they stood at bay.

The priest's house, the weakest, was first attacked, and after a long day's fight had to be abandoned, Bassetti and its defenders retiring with some loss to the gendarmerie.

The next day the assailants proposed honourable terms to the besieged in the gendarmerie, by which they were to be permitted to retire, holding possession of their arms, to the nearest European settlement. Matters being thus concluded, M. Bassetti and the rest came forth—to be immediately massacred with excessive brutality by the natives.

In this horrible carnage forty-one persons were killed; only two, a French officer and the son of the Mayor, being spared—all the poor lad's entreaties for the life of his father being disregarded.

The *maison cantonnière*—the house of the road-makers—in which the rest of the besieged, including the women and children were shut up, was next attacked.

This was the citadel of the impromptu fortress, the road-makers' houses being built with some idea of serving as a defence for the workmen, in case of attack from the natives; but it scarcely answered the requirements of a stronghold. The besieged found themselves compelled to retreat to the upper floor, destroying the staircase that led to it; upon which the enemy, entering the ground-floor, filled it with combustibles, and fired it.

The position of the besieged was most deplorable. They retreated again to the terrace or roof of the building.

"It was now noon. In a space of thirteen square yards forty-five persons (of whom thirty-two were women) were crowded together. The wall or parapet of the roof was not a foot and a half high, so that they were obliged to lie down in order to escape the shots of their enemies. Four of the men who stood up to fire over the wall were killed. The Arabs, finding that their balls did not fall on the terrace, threw stones and bricks, which fell on the devoted heads of the people, several of whom were severely injured by these missiles. The situation of the Europeans was dreadful. A burning sun darted its ardent rays from above, whilst a hot sirocco added to the intolerable heat. Under their feet, the house being on fire made the scorching floor painful to tread on, and to increase their sufferings they had not a drop of water to quench their thirst. In this great distress one of their number committed suicide; the women wept and groaned aloud, entreating their husbands and friends to put an end to their misery by surrendering; but this the men refused to do, preferring, they said, rather to die in the flames than to undergo the fate of their comrades of the gendarmerie; they also hoped that succour might come at the last moment.

"The iron-work of the terrace prevented the arched roof from falling; but the fire below made it crack and sink inwards, until smoke and flames were seen through the crevices. The dresses of the besieged caught fire, and at every moment it was necessary to take precautions to prevent the powder from exploding.

"At six o'clock in the evening, the arch being on the point of collapsing, it was no longer possible to prolong this heroic struggle, and the defenders of the place at last resolved to listen to what terms the Arabs would offer."—*Algeria as It Is.*

They were promised their lives and a safe-conduct to France, the Caids assuring them that the French were everywhere being driven out of the country.

They consequently gave up their arms, and the little garrison, consisting of forty persons, of whom thirty-two were women and children, surrendered. They were instantly stripped of everything they possessed, even of their clothes, but their lives were spared.

They were kept prisoners for nearly a month, and released after suffering much ill-treatment at the end of the insurrection, when Mokrani, the chief instigator of it, was killed.

Palestro has now been rebuilt. A fort has been constructed, numerous plantations of the eucalyptus have been made, and the village is thriving, with many colonists from Alsace and Lorraine. The victims of 1871 are buried in the churchyard, and the survivors and relatives have received considerable grants both of land and money.

The road from Palestro is good, and continues to be interesting, passing through well-cultivated and luxuriant valleys crowned with Kabyle villages. In about fifteen miles the little auberge of Sidi Othman is reached, so called from a koubba near the house. Breakfast may be obtained here or about eight miles farther on at Oued Djemaa, one of the old road-makers' houses, now a fairly comfortable inn.

The road now passes the river by an iron bridge, and ascends rapidly, soon entering a thick wood, which extends to Bouïra, and which is almost the only part of Algeria still frequented by lions and other large beasts of prey.

Bordj Bouïra, seventy-seven miles from Algiers, *the fort of the well*, is an important village risen from its ruins since 1871. It is situated at a height of over 1,400 feet above the sea, and surrounded by mountains covered with snow during a great part of the year. Here is a caravansary, and a couple of miles further on the Hôtel de France, where good food and lodging can be obtained.

["From this place is the cross-road to Aumale, only practicable in fine weather. Aumale itself is not a place of much interest, although some interesting excursions are to be made in its neighbourhood. It was the Roman Auzia, a place of much consequence in the first and

second centuries of the Christian era. The Turks built a fort out of the ruins of the Roman city, which was itself a ruin when the French first visited the place in 1843."]

From Bouïra the road turns west, becoming wilder and bleaker as it more nearly approaches the mountains, the tops of which are crowned with cedar-woods, and covered until late on in the spring with snow. The halt for this day is either at Ain-el-Smaan (the spring of the ruins), where there is a caravansary; or it will be well, perhaps, for the traveller to push on as far as Adjiba, at the junction of two streams, which form the Oued-es-Sahel—in time of flood a most formidable torrent.

The road from thence passes at the very foot of the Djurdjura, from which only the Oued-Sahel separates it, crossing through a fine wood of olive-trees, in which is the great Kabyle village of Taourit. A couple of miles further on is *Beni Mansour*, where the night must be passed at the caravansary.

Beni Mansour commands a most beautiful view of the snow and cedar-crowned Djurdjura, and of the valley of the Oued-Sahel, rich in luxuriant vegetation. The highest peak visible is the Lalla Khadija, nearly at the top of which is a shrine, made famous by Kabyle pilgrimages.

The fort of Beni Mansour was besieged in the insurrection for five weeks. The Kabyles brought against it an old field-gun, now to be seen in the courtyard of the Bordj, which had been abandoned by the French during one of the usual disastrous descents upon the Algerine coast. It bears the inscription *Deos me aivet*, and the date 1635.

It is curious that an English traveller just a month before the insurrection should have written—

"On approaching Beni Mansour I perceived that the fortress was completely commanded by the Arab town just above; but as the natives possess no cannon, this defect is unimportant."—*Colonel Vereker's Scenes in the Sunny South.*

The road traverses a bleak, wild country, sprinkled with wild olives and juniper-bushes, growing wilder and bleaker at every yard.

[Those who intend visiting the Petites Portes should take a guide from Beni Mansour, making a bargain as to price.]

The Portes-de-fer, or Bibans, as they are called by the Arabs, from *Bab*, a gate, are extraordinarily narrow passes through the Djurdjura Mountains, formed by fissures in vertical rocks, of very remarkable conformation and enormous height.

Through the wider of these, the Grande Porte, the high-road to Constantine now passes, following the bed of the stream which flows between cyclopean rocky walls, and for whose course the mountain seems literally rent in two. The scene is one of wild magnificence and severity—the huge mountains piled one on another in a thousand fantastic shapes, and the rocks in different geological strata, set up as it were on end—as one writer observes—like the side scenes of a theatre. The stream which flows between is salt; close at hand are boiling sulphurous springs, and hot salt pools—all telling of violent upheavals, and sullen, smouldering fires. Nature seems here presented in her sternest and most threatening aspect; yet, like many another ancient nurse, she only threatens and does not strike!

Even more interesting than the Grande Porte are what are known as "Les Petites Portes," to reach which the traveller must leave the high-road about a mile and a half before the Grand Porte, at a place called the Trois Palmiers.

A rough walk or ride of about a mile and a half up the bed of the salt stream, leads between constantly narrowing walls of rock not less than eight or nine hundred feet high, to a point where there is scarcely room for the little Oued to squeeze its way through, and where in time of flood the torrent rages between its rocky walls at a depth of many feet. There are no less than four of these fissures in the mountain chain, the last opening out on, and presenting a *coup d'œil* of, a richly luxuriant and wooded country of picturesque valleys and pine-crowned hills.

It was through the "Petites Portes" that the French column under Marshal Valée and the Duc d'Orléans made its famous march—with a forged safe-conduct—through the Kabyle country. "Through this remarkable defile," writes a French author, "where the Roman legions had never penetrated, and which the Turks had paid tribute to pass, two thousand men marched in four hours, leaving the significant inscription cut high on the rock, 'Armée française, 1839.'" The achievement led to a sanguinary war, which lasted without cessation for seven years!

In conclusion, a few words as to the Kabyle institutions. Kabylia has been, as has been before stated, from time immemorial governed by her own laws, and presents a most remarkable instance of a savage free republic. Each village formerly had a representative, called an *amin*, elected every year on a principle of universal suffrage; the duties of the *amin* being to administer justice and regulate public expenditure. A parliament of *amins* elected a president from their body, but these could decide on no important matter without referring the case to their constituents, who met weekly in each village for deliberation.

The tribes were also united in a kind of confederation, offensive and defensive, called a *Sof*—a remarkable democratic institution, which is, perhaps, best described as "a mutual association, destined to cause the rights of an oppressed majority, to be respected by a powerful and overbearing minority." Since the insurrection of 1871, the French have considerably modified all these institutions which they had previously respected, and the *amins* are now appointed by the French instead of being elected by the tribes.

The Kabyles possess no written laws, but are governed by well-defined traditions. They recognise the law of reprisal as commanded in the Koran—"a hand for a hand, an eye for an eye"—but commute this by fines—corporal punishment of every kind being abhorrent to them—a fixed sum for every offence, the penalties ranging from one franc and a half to two hundred francs, the highest penalty being for him who interposes between two persons, one of whom has a legitimate vengeance to inflict on the other. The crime of murder is alone not so to be expiated, but is the private business of the family of the victim—a system closely resembling the *vendetta* of Corsica and Sicily.

The fines and taxes are applied for the maintenance of mosques, schools, and refuges for indigent persons and travellers. One very remarkable Kabyle institution is the *Anaya*, a kind of freemasonry, which renders the person who claims it inviolable, even in the midst of personal enemies, or in a hostile tribe. Scarcely any instances are known of the anaya being outraged: but a village which once, according to tradition, disgraced itself by the murder of a person travelling under its protection, was instantly destroyed, and left as a warning to future generations.

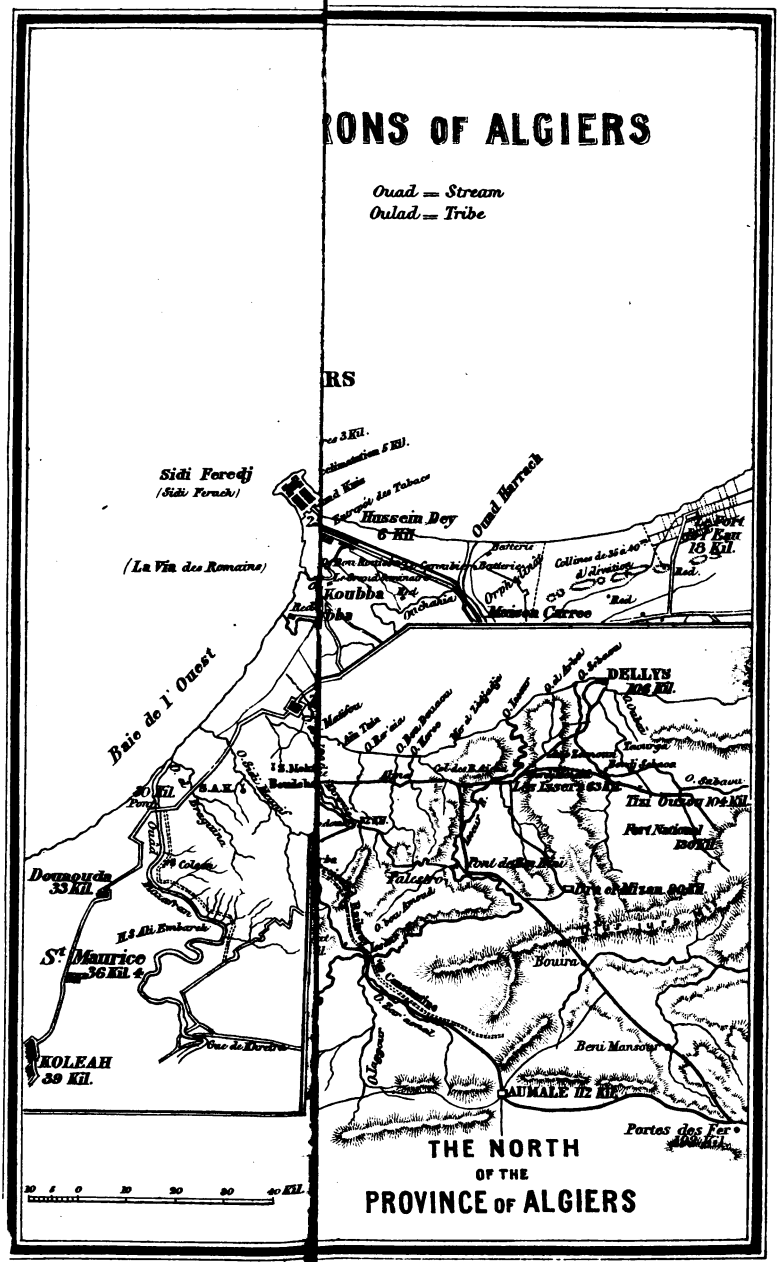
The Kabyles pay a very great regard to the teachings, and are very much under the influence, of their priests or marabouts, but the influence is personal rather than sacerdotal. They do not consider themselves bound to accept the Koran as an entire rule of faith, and are said to have been in early times, better Christians than they have proved themselves Mahomedans.

"The Kabyle accepted but did not embrace Islamism. He is clothed with it as with a burnous, keeping beneath it his own social habits."—*La Kabylie. General Daumas.*

In proof of which are cited his customs of keeping Sunday as his day of prayer, of seldom marrying more than one wife, of treating her as an equal rather than as a slave, and of permitting her to go unveiled.

In spite of the somewhat rough awakening which some of the too ardent Kabylophiles had in 1871, the philanthropists and politicians of Algeria still look forward with hope to the future of this remarkable people, believing that their qualities of industry, energy, and truthfulness will, by-and-by, develop them into useful and intelligent citizens; and that as civilization reaches them, the traditions of their earlier history will return more and more strongly upon them—that the cross with which the Kabyle women, in dim remembrance of a lost religion, so often tattoo their foreheads, may grow to be no mere barbaric ornament, but the holy symbol of a living faith.

That this and all other good things of peace and prosperity, may be included in the future fortunes of Algeria, will surely be the hearty wish of all those who, having come to know her, have thereby learned to love her.


RONS OF ALGIERS
Ouad = Stream
Oulad = Tribe
RS
Sidi Feredj
(Sidi Ferach)
(La Via des Romains)
Baie de l' Ouest
Hussein Dey
6 Kil.
Koubba
Oued Harrach
Maison Carree
18 Kil.
DELLYS
104 Kil.
Port National
80 Kil.
Palaiseau
Bouira
Beni Mansour
Portes des Fer
Dourouda
33 Kil.
St. Maurice
36 Kil.
KOLEAH
39 Kil.
THE NORTH
OF THE
PROVINCE OF ALGIERS
Lithographs. W.& A.K. Johnston, Edinb

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